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Inter-Arab Affairs

Libyan Envoy on Arab League Future, Lockerbie

PM2502162693 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 26 Feb 93 p 38

[Interview with Libya's Arab League representative Ibrahim al-Bishari by Usamah 'Ajjaj in Cairo; date not given]

[Excerpts] ['Ajjaj] Do you believe that the natural start of the interview should be the claim by some people that Arab crises have transcended the Arab League to the extent that some people believe it has lost the justification for its existence, especially after the Gulf crisis?

[Al-Bishari] The Arab League—with its agreements, whether the Joint Arab Defense Pact or the Economic Unity Treaty—formed a framework for Arab security and the Arab order. The Arab League has always been the house in which the Arabs meet to discuss their issues and resolve their disputes. But since the Gulf war and its effects it clearly seems that the Arab order has cracked and a flaw has appeared. This is because the Arab League could not—as is being said—solve this Arab-Arab problem. It was solved through an international coalition and resolutions from the Security Council—which caused some people to accuse the Arab League of losing its role and the justification for its existence. We believe this accusation is unjust and untrue. The Arab League remains an important regional establishment which has a role. And it can contribute to reorganizing the Arab order and play a role in creating a degree of solidarity that leads to stability and common security—a strategic task for the Arab nation.

['Ajjaj] We know that the Jamahiriyah's general inclination is to bolster the league. And Colonel al-Qadhdhafi proposed a plan to bolster the league. May we know further details about this plan?

[Al-Bishari] We in Libya have never lost our faith in the League's role. And we believe in its importance and usefulness. However, we believe that there is certainly a shortcoming in its performance. It is to do with the mechanisms of action and the Arabs' feeling that the charter needs to be developed or that appendixes need to be added to it. In this connection Col. al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, submitted an integrated plan to the Arab summit in Algiers, and in Baghdad it received the Arab kings' and leaders' support and backing. The plan was entitled "the Arab Union Plan." Its aim is to create a united Arab league and to expand and departmentialize the summit establishment, because the summit establishment is outside the league's framework. We want it to be departmentalized in order to become a presidential council that convenes periodically and has a periodic chairman and specified powers. We also call for the General Secretariat to be turned into a general secretariat for the union, to which ministerial councils specializing in foreign affairs, agriculture, and all other areas would belong. Their task would be to look after people's vital affairs, from food to security, and coordinate Arab policies. A committee was formed to discuss the Libyan plan but its proceedings have stopped because conditions are not suitable. However, we say that no matter how long present Arab conditions continue, they are accidental. [passage omitted]

['Ajjaj] We believe that we cannot end the interview without broaching the Lockerbie issue, which is one of the important files which you dealt with during your service as foreign minister. Do you believe that there is a new possibility of a solution in view of the presence of a new U.S. Administration?

[Al-Bishari] Obviously it seems that the presence of a new U.S. Administration, which is not charged like the Bush and Reagan administrations, is an element which should not be overlooked in the search for a solution to this problem, which has continued for a year, has had very harmful effects on the Libyan people, and certainly harmed the Maghreb Union states. It has also obstructed joint Arab action and the dialogue between the European and Arab states and harmed all neighboring states: Sudan,' Egypt, Chad, and Niger. I am not talking here about the Arab Maghreb states. All this indicates that the time has come to find a solution to this problem. Former President Bush sought to escalate this problem, although he is a jurist, to settle old accounts with the Libyan revolution. And fortunately, the U.S. people had their say in the elections which brought President Clinton to office.

['Ajjaj] What are the tangible indications which prompt Libya to be optimistic about the possibility of finding a solution under the Clinton administration?

[Al-Bishari] We do not have tangible indications in our hands which say there is a change in the United States. However, we believe that the new administration will not be like the former administration. And experience has taught us that democratic administrations resolve problems through dialogue and negotiation. We have two examples: President Kennedy was able to resolve the most serious crisis with the Soviet Union, that is the missile crisis in Cuba, through dialogue with Khrushchev. And President Carter's administration was always peaceful and never sought to resolve any problem by force. And President Clinton came to power through the will of the U.S. people and with different ideas. We hope that he and his administration will understand the people's right to live in dignity and freedom. And that he will shoulder his responsibility as president of the largest state with regard to respecting other states' policies and dealing with world states democratically, namely through the logic of dialogue and negotiation. If that happens, the issue will be resolved in a sound and normal way and in a way that safeguards everyone's rights, especially as Libya did not refuse to allow the suspects to stand trial. Actually it is demanding that in order for the truth to emerge. All it is demanding is respect for the Libyan state's sovereignty and respect for the principles of international law—which is recognized in relations among states. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

Al-Husayni Receives 'Encouraging' Clinton Letter

TA2502180493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] In the framework of the efforts to convince the Palestinians to come to the peace talks, Faysal al-Husayni today received a letter from U.S. President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher. Palestinian delegates said that, from their point of view, the letter is very encouraging, and that in it the Palestinians received replies to some of the requests they presented to Christopher. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokesman of the Palestinian delegation, said this evening that the delegates will continue their consultations and have not yet reached a decision on whether to attend the talks in April. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports:

[Begin recording] [Amir] The Palestinian delegates have not yet finished consultations among themselves and with the Americans, and have not yet responded positively to Secretary Christopher's invitation for the ninth round of talks in Washington in April. Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokesman of the Palestinian delegation, told Qol Yisra'el this evening that the chances for the Palestinian participation in the talks are now greater.

['Ashrawi, in English] Well, I think if all the points and all the ideas raised are accepted as they are, then the chances are very good indeed. We did not present any bargaining points. As I said, we presented basic issues that should be addressed. The letters that we received, that Mr. al-Husayni received today from Clinton and Christopher, do fulfill some of the requirements. Now we are trying to work out some things that should come from the Israeli side.

[Amir translates and continues] Dr. 'Ashrawi stressed that the Palestinian delegation members are currently awaiting an Israeli Government's reply on a single issue. According to her, Clinton's letter to al-Husayni is very encouraging.

['Ashrawi in English] Well, it is about the peace process, and the American ongoing commitment, and involvement, and interest, and affirmation of the terms of reference. It is a very positive and encouraging letter.

[Amir translates and continues] About an hour ago, the Palestinians concluded a series of consultations in the Palestinian delegation offices in East Jerusalem and went back to their homes. Secretary Christopher's announcement about the resumption of the peace talks in April did not surprise them, and it seems that they will announce that they will attend the talks within the next 24 hours. [end recording]

U.S. Proposals Still Under Discussion

TA2502182993 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Members of the Palestinian negotiating delegation held intensive consultations today at the delegation's headquarters in East Jerusalem on the results of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit to the region. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the delegation members briefed representatives of institutions in the territories, of chambers of commerce, and the Palestinian opposition of the outcome of the meetings which they held with the U.S. secretary of state regarding a solution to the deportee issue and the possibility of resuming the peace process.

Palestinian delegation member Ghassan al-Khatib told our correspondent that the proposals presented by the United States for resuming the peace talks are still under discussion both inside and outside the territories.

Our correspondent has learned that some Palestinian delegation members are weighing the possibility of traveling abroad soon to participate in the assessment of Christopher's visit to the region by the Palestinian leadership outside.

Palestinians Expected To Announce Joining Talks

TA2602073493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Excerpts] Palestinian leaders in the territories will leave within a few days to hold consultations with the PLO leadership. Knowledgeable sources said that the Palestinians will only announce whether or not they will participate in the next round of peace talks after the conference of Arab foreign ministers. The members of the Palestinian delegation are meanwhile continuing their consultations and maintaining contact with U.S. officials in order, to quote, receive clarifications. Our correspondent in the territories Moti Amir reports.

[Begin recording] [Amir] Last night, the heads of the Palestinian delegation continued their consultations and discussions regarding the proposals they had submitted to the Americans and the answers they have received so far. [passage omitted]

Dr. Nazmi al-Ju'bah, who is a member of the Palestinian advisory committee, believes that only the Israeli Government can bring the Palestinians back to the negotiating table.

[al-Ju'bah] First of all, the negotiations are held with the Israeli delegation and not with the deportees. We already said that during the eighth round of talks. However, my people must be told that Israel is committed to human rights and will stop carrying out deportations and similar measures. In other words, like I said in the beginning, we have two problems: the negotiations as well as human rights, and especially the deportee affair.

[Amir] Bethlehem mayor Ilyas Frayj, who participated in Secretary of State Christopher's first meeting with the Palestinians, believes that the Palestinians are very interested in returning to the negotiating table.

[Frayj, in English] The Palestinians are very seriously interested in participating in the peace talks. The Palestinians would like to see a successful peace process going on, and let us hope that during the next few weeks things will be worked out in a way that all parties will participate in the next round of talks.

[Amir translates above remarks and continues] After speaking with other members of the Palestinian delegation, the following picture develops. The Palestinians received almost all they wanted from the Americans, including promises of certain changes in the form of the negotiations to be held in Washington. After holding consultations next week in Tunis, the Palestinians will announce their participation in the ninth round of negotiations during the conference of Arab foreign ministers. Palestinian sources pointed out that Israel will be then expected to announce that it will not resort to deportations while the negotiations are still underway. [end recording]

Israel Said To Make Talks Resumption 'Difficult'

JN2502191893 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Muhammad Kurayshan dispatch from Tunis]

[Text] The PLO Executive Committee today began a series of meetings to evaluate the situation following U.S. Secretary of State Christopher's recent tour of the region. PLO Executive Committee Member Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh told the Radio Monte Carlo correspondent that it is regrettable that this morning the United States went back on its proposals to the PLO which it said enjoyed Israel's approval. The proposals include a commitment by Tel Aviv to implement Resolution 799 and return the deportees through speedy measures, a pledge that no deportation will be made in the future, and assurance that it will search for practical and effective steps to ensure the rights of the Palestinian people and end violations of their rights.

'Abd-Rabbuh added that the PLO had regarded these proposals as a step forward which needed promoting especially concerning the basis of the peace process and because it invokes Resolution 242 in a clear manner. However, Israel's rejection of these proposals and its adherence to the formula of the agreement on the deportees which it reached with Washington in early February makes the resumption of the peace talks very difficult.

'Abd-Rabbuh said the Israeli hard-line attitude foiled any possibility to realize tangible progress from the Christopher tour, adding that the PLO will reevaluate the situation after making Arab and International contacts.

'Ashrawi Comments on U.S. Call for April Talks

NC2602091693 Paris AFP in English 0843 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Excerpts] Jerusalem, Feb 26 (AFP) - A U.S. call for a resumption of the Middle East peace talks in April is "premature", the head of the Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace talks said Friday [26 February].

"It's a little bit premature," delegation chief Haydar 'Abd-al- Shafi told Israel radio. [passage omitted]

Palestinian delegation spokeswoman Hanan 'Ashrawi told AFP: "We will not attend anything until we get some response from the Israelis. The Americans assumed things would move but the Israelis have not yet come through."

"There is still serious and hard work to be done and we will not give any response to the call for talks in April until we are satisfied."

'Ashrawi pointed out that the official invitations had not yet been issued, but added: "The Americans know they didn't have a response from us but they must be confident they can do it. If we overcome the obstacles before April then the talks can go ahead."

She said the leader of the "Palestinian team" to the peace talks, Faysal al-Husayni, had received letters from U.S. President Bill Clinton and Christopher outlining U.S. policy on the peace negotiations and reaffirming commitment to the land-for-peace formula. The letters had stated that the mass deportations were illegal and underlined that the peace process was a priority for the new administration which was ready to be a "full partner" rather than just a "honest broker" as before, 'Ashrawi added.

On the invitation to Moscow, she said: "The Russians are co-sponsors who have official ties with the PLO and they want to play a role which is distinctive from the United States."

U.S. Announcement on Talks Called 'Premature'

TA2602093593 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Eldad Beck on remarks made by Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, the head of the Palestinian delegation, on 26 February—recorded, with 'Abd-al-Shafi speaking in English]

[Excerpts] [Beck] The Arab states have still not reacted to Secretary of State Christopher's announcement yesterday regarding the resumption of the peace talks. The first reactions we have received are from the Palestinian camp. This morning we spoke with Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, the head of the Palestinian delegation. 'Abd-al-Shafi said that the American announcement of the resumption of the peace talks was premature.

['Abd-al-Shafi] My opinion on this indication is that it was a little premature because still the American administration did not respond to the Palestinian requirement...

[Beck superimposes translation of above remarks into Hebrew and continues] ...on two issues: first, the matter of the deportees and second, the peace process. I asked Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi whether he thought that the United States was trying to present the Palestinians with a fait accompli; or in other words, was the announcement on the resumption of the talks made before the Palestinians had issued a positive reply in order to leave them with no choice but to agree to participate in the talks.

['Abd-al-Shafi] Well, I do not wish to say so. But I think that the Americans are in a hurry to tender this invitation before reaching an agreement with the Palestinians...

[Beck superimposes translation of above remarks into Hebrew and continues] ...who are still waiting for answers and clarifications from the United States and Israel. This morning the Palestinians are continuing their consultations with U.S. and Russian officials regarding their conditions for the resumption of the peace process. Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi described the talks held with Secretary of State Christopher and those held with U.S. officials following Christopher's departure as positive. As for the surprising allegation made yesterday by PLO Spokesman Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh that the Americans had gone back on their compromise proposals, 'Abd-al-Shafi said that 'Abd-Rabbuh must have been given the wrong information and that the matter had been closed. [passage omitted]

[Beck] The Palestinians most pressing concern regarding the deportees is their demand that Israel immediately declare that it will refrain from carrying out deportations in future.

['Abd-al-Shafi] Basically, we want Israel to declare that it will refrain from resorting to deportations in principle in the future.

[Beck superimposes translation of above remarks into Hebrew and continues] 'Abd-al-Shafi said that Rabin's statements during his joint news conference with Secretary of State Christopher, according to which the deportations were the exception to Israel's policy were insufficient.

PLO Told of Israeli Rejection of U.S. Proposals

LD2502134693 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Excerpt] Before we go into the results of the U.S. secretary of state's visit to the Middle East, we will stop in Tunis where the PLO has announced that it was informed by the United States this morning of the latter's decision to withdraw the proposals it had made to resolve the crisis of the Palestinian deportees. Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, member of the PLO Executive Committee, said: The United States informed us today of the Israeli side's rejection of the proposals made by Washington to resolve the crisis of the deportees. He added that things have returned to where they started from. [passage omitted]

'Arafat Informs Mubarak

JN2502173293 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1600 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, head of the PLO Information Department and Executive Committee member, has stated that the U.S. proposals on the deportees presented to the Palestinian delegation by the U.S. secretary of state yesterday provide for a speedy return by Israel of the deportees in southern Lebanon and Israel's pledge that it will not deport others in the future. 'Abd-Rabbuh said the U.S. proposals demand an Israeli commitment to refraining from deportations in the future and implementing Resolution 799 within a short time.

A source close to the PLO said that Warren Christopher also proposed that Israel return all persons deported since 1967 and affirmed that Resolutions 242 and 338 remain the basis for peace negotiations.

Other Palestinian sources also said that the U.S. secretary of state's proposals stated that Israel pledged to stop attacks on Palestinians in the occupied territory and that Washington is committed to playing an effective role so negotiations, which could be resumed next April, could bear fruit.

On another level, PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat has sent an urgent letter to Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and to the Russian foreign minister informing them that the United States has withdrawn its proposals.

The PLO has been holding meetings since last night to discuss these proposals.

Hamas Leaders Reportedly Met U.S. Diplomat

JN2502131493 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Randah Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Text] The Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] representative in Jordan, Muhammad Nazzal, has told our radio that since the beginning of the problem with the Palestinian deportees, most of whom belong to Hamas, his movement has met twice with a U.S. diplomat. Nazzal said two meetings were recently held in Amman between the counselor [not further identified] of the U.S. Embassy and Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman for the movement, in addition to Nazzal himself. He added that a third meeting was slated to take place, but did not materialize after Hamas said the meeting should be with U.S. Ambassador in Amman Roger Harrison, who rejected the idea. Ghawshah and Nazzal also met with

the British, Italian, and German ambassadors to Jordan. Talks dealt with the deportee issue.

Political sources said these meetings, representing the first dialogue between Washington and Hamas, are an important development following Washington's announced intention to add Hamas to the list of terrorist groups. These contacts also preceded the U.S. Administration's refusal to resume its dialogue with the PLO. This administration rejected an offer to this effect presented by the Palestinian negotiators to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Jerusalem yesterday. American sources accompanying Christopher on his tour, said he replied to the Palestinian request by saying his country refuses to hold dialogue with the PLO because it is linked to terrorist movements.

Christopher Remarks on PLO Called 'Insult'

JN2602091893 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 26 Feb 93 pp 1, 23

[Excerpt] Amman (AL-RA'Y)—Commenting on U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's statement accusing the PLO of being close to terrorist trends, Taysir Khalid, member of the PLO Executive Committee and member of the Political Bureau of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, has said that Christopher is not satisfied with following the policy of double standards in dealing with the resolutions of international legitimacy, and covering up Israel's practices in the occupied territory and continued violations of Palestinian human rights. Christopher, he added, is also accusing the PLO of terrorism.

Taysir Khalid said that Christopher's statements constitute an insult to the Palestinian people and represent a hostile stand toward their just national struggle and national rights endorsed by international legitimacy. He called on Christopher to apologize for his statement, which only gives Palestinians a new reason to withdraw from the Washington talks.

Taysir Khalid noted that the PLO Executive Committee will meet today to discuss the results of Christopher's tour. He stressed that the response to the U.S. Administration's bias toward Israel, its silence over continued violations in the occupied territory, and encouraging Israel to continue its noncompliance with international legitimacy should be Palestinian withdrawal from the bilateral and multilateral talks. He added that the Palestinians should also call on the involved Arab countries to express solidarity with this stand, to force Israel into complying with international legitimacy and make the U.S. Administration stop its policy of double standards in dealing with international legitimacy. Taysir Khalid added that the United States should also be urged to restore its dialogue with the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, particularly in the wake of the recent meetings between U.S. officials and members of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. [passage omitted]

'Ashrawi Denies Christopher Remarks

TA2602135493 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 26 Feb 93 p 1

[By Da'ud Kuttab]

[Text] Jerusalem—Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi has denied news media reports in which U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is said to have described the PLO as "a terrorist organization."

The Palestinian delegation's official spokesman said that the only sentence which Christopher mentioned to the Palestinian notables was that the time was not ripe for conducting a U.S.-PLO dialogue.

'Ashrawi considered that the remarks attributed to the anonymous U.S. official were an attempt to sow discord within the Palestinian leadership. She accused officials in the U.S. Administration of fabricating these statements, which were not made by the U.S. secretary.

Memorandum Delivered To Christopher Detailed

JN2502220393 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1809 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] A Palestinian delegation led by brother Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Steering Committee affiliated with the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, has held a second meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and the delegation accompanying him.

During the meeting, the Palestinian delegation relayed a message from brother president Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] to the U.S. Administration. The message explained the Palestinian position with regard to the developments of the peace process, the deportee issue, and U.S.-Palestinian ties. The Palestinian delegation explained various aspects of the Palestinian position, underscoring the deportee issue, human rights issues, as well as U.S.-Palestinian ties, and the peace negotiations.

The delegation also delivered to the U.S. delegation a detailed memorandum, explaining the Palestinian position vis-a-vis various issues.

The Palestinian delegation comprised Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, Hanan 'Ashrawi, Ilyas Frayj, Zahirah Kamal, Frayh Abu-Middayn, 'Ali al-Qawasimi, Mahir al-Masri, Mustafa al-Barghuthi, and 'Ali al-Jirbawi.

The Palestinian team to the peace negotiations has affirmed the need for Israel to fully comply with Security Council Resolution 799 so that the peace process could be resumed and the Palestinians could take part in it. The Palestinian team has urged the United States to resume dialogue with the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of our Palestinian people.

This came in a memorandum handed over to the U.S. secretary of state during a meeting a Palestinian delegation held with him in Jerusalem.

The memorandum indicated that it is proper and necessary at this point in time to conduct a serious assessment of the peace process and the basic pitfalls plaguing it, and also to evaluate the obstacles which obstructed progress in this process. The memorandum outlined five basic points which the delegation deemed crucially important in such an assessment and evaluation. These points revolve around the U.S. role, the deportee issue, human rights issues, U.S.-Palestinian ties, Palestinian representation, as well as key issues in the negotiations.

With regard to the first point, the Palestinian team indicated that the United States has failed to shoulder its responsibilities toward the peace process—something which cost it its credibility and caused the parties concerned to have serious doubts about the overall peace process. The memorandum added: If the United States were to play its proper role, it must underscore the terms of reference of the peace process; namely, Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 as well as the principle of trading land for peace. Moreover, the United States must ensure the compliance of all parties with these terms of reference.

Concerning deportations, the memorandum said: The deportations evoke the specter of the 1948 transfer in the Palestinians collective and historical memory, as well as the impact of this tragedy of exile and displacement. The Palestinian people's national identity is inextricably associated with Palestinian soil. This is the embodiment of Palestinian existence and continuity. Besides, the deportations have seriously jeopardized the peace process, given that they reflected deeds and intentions that conflict with the principles and objectives of the peace process.

The memorandum continued: Israel must immediately implement Resolution 799. Furthermore, the United States and Israel must unequivocally acknowledge that the deportations are illegal. Additionally, Israel must pledge not to resort to fresh deportations in the future so that the peace process may be resumed, and so that the Palestinian side may take part in the peace talks.

With respect to human rights issues, the memorandum explained the serious escalation effected in Israel's savage human rights violations, detailing these violations in various spheres, including the continuation of massive settlement activities, the demolition of houses, the killing of children, as well as the activities being carried by undercover units, the situation of prisoners, and the economic siege imposed on Palestinians.

The memorandum demanded the immediate provision of international protection for the Palestinians of the occupied territories.

Regarding U.S-Palestinian ties, the memorandum stressed the need to immediately resume the dialogue between the U.S. Administration and the PLO. The memorandum also affirmed the need to revoke the restrictions imposed on Palestinian participation in the peace process.

Concerning the negotiations, the Palestinian team held the Israeli Government fully responsible for obstructing the negotiations, noting its violations of the terms of reference of the peace process and its timeframe. The Palestinian team affirmed that Israel should acknowledge that Resolution 242 applies to all phases of the solution. Besides, Israel should acknowledge that there is a chronological and objective linkage between the phases of the solution. Moreover, Israel must admit that Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip are occupied territory. Israel must also acknowledge that the withdrawal principle enshrined in Resolution 242 applies to these territories.

The memorandum also stressed the need for Israel to acknowledge that all occupied territories will be deemed a single geographic, political, legislative, and economic entity during the transitional phase, thus affirming the Palestinians' rejection of the Israeli plan, which aims to partition Palestinian territory and to consecrate the existence of settlements.

The Palestinian team affirmed that Jerusalem is an indivisible part of the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967, and that any settlement that fails to address the issue of Jerusalem will be deemed unacceptable, and that such a settlement will be doomed to failure.

Al-Husayni Cited on Talks With Christopher

JN2502213093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1545 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Faysal al-Husayni [head of peace talks advisory council] said this evening that the Palestinian side has, since last night, been engaged in intensive contacts and consultations regarding the proposals and ideas U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher presented during his meeting with the Palestinians. Al-Husayni added that these proposals contain substantive points, which could ease the difficulties obstructing the peace process, particularly the deportee issue. Our correspondent Sa'id Mu'addi conducted the following telephone conversation with Faysal al-Husayni:

[Begin recording] [Mu'addi] Mr. Faysal al-Husayni, good afternoon.

[Al-Husayni] Good afternoon.

[Mu'addi] Mr. Faysal, could you tell us about the latest developments pertaining to the contacts which have continued since last night on the stand that should be espoused by the Palestinians?

[Al-Husayni] As a matter of fact, the contacts concern the possible emergence with a stand that could allow the continuation of the peace process, particularly with regard to the obstacles faced by the peace process in the past and primarily the deportee issue. I believe that we are still in the process of discussing important points regarding the illegality of the deportations and finding ways to ensure the repatriation of the deportees in Marj

al-Zuhur, as well as other deportees. However, this issue is still under study and consideration. We have not thus far crystallized a final formula in this regard.

[Mu'addi] [PLO Executive Committee member] Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh stated in Tunis today that the United States has withdrawn the proposals it submitted yesterday to resolve the deportee issue. What is the significance of this statement with regard to the decision the Palestinian side will make in this regard? Will such a decision be made in coordination with the PLO?

[Al-Husayni] Let us say that the discussions are still continuing on these issues. The discussions and debate are still continuing. We are still in the heat of debate regarding these issues.

[Mu'addi] Do you pin any hopes on the proposals and ideas submitted during the meeting you had with the U.S. secretary of state?

[Al-Husayni] Certain points were raised. Similarly, a certain formula was raised. We believe that this formula will most likely help reach proper formulas. But, as I have already told you, the issue is still under consideration.

[Mu'addi] What are the future steps the Palestinian side will take? When do you think the Palestinians will make their final decision?

[Al-Husayni] This is contingent upon the results that could be reached during the next few days. Consequently, I cannot give you an answer to this question right now.

[Mu'addi] Mr. Faysal al-Husayni, thank you very much.

[Al-Husayni] You are most welcome. [end recording]

Pressure Said Exerted by 'Some' Arab Sides

LD2602042593 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1902 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Brothers, today, the U.S. secretary of state left the area at the end of his visit to a number of area capitals. After he explored the various stances and listened to viewpoints concerning the resumption of the negotiating process, it appears that, despite the fact that the U.S. Administration showed interest and focused on proposing a new date that would ensure the return of all the parties to the negotiating table, the tour of the U.S. secretary of state has not given any indication of this new date.

The U.S. secretary of state has returned to Washington, while his delegation began to complete a brief account of the various viewpoints for him to try to bridge the gap, in order to revive the faltering peace negotiations. It appears that bringing the viewpoints closer is not an easy matter, as a result of the basic differences in position, especially between the Palestinian and Israeli positions.

Israel quite clearly and openly has been trying to exploit the visit of Warren Christopher, following the conclusion of the U.S.- Israeli deal, to apply pressure on the Palestinian side to force it to go to the negotiating table. The Israeli foreign minister said that Israel does not intend to put forward any more initiatives with regard to the deportees' issue. He was thinking that the Palestinians will, in the end, see that they must return to negotiations. Israel is relying mainly, but indirectly, on the pressure being exerted on the Palestinian side by some Arab sides, who want to return to the negotiating table without a clear and unambiguous acceptance of the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 799.

In this connection, Israel has something to rely on. The declared Syrian stand, announced by the Syrian foreign minister, who was in favor of not linking the peace process to UN Resolution 799, is that the negotiating process seeks the implementation of all the UN Security Council resolutions. The Syrian minister said that one should not be selective when it comes to implementing these resolutions, because they all are expected to be implemented in the peace process, and this is more comprehensive than the resolution on the deportees.

The Palestinian position is clear, perhaps even very clear. It centers on the fact that continuing the negotiation process is dependent on its ability to ensure implementation of international resolutions. As for the ability of the process to ensure the implementation of the resolutions, there is no better way of beginning this than by implementing UN Resolution 799.

As for the return to the negotiating table and to the aforementioned resolution, this is still open to interpretation and to application. Israel does not want to recognize this resolution or to comply with it. This is an unhealthy situation for the peace process.

Peace cannot be imposed. The Palestinian people are not in a capitulationist situation. If the peace process is expected to continue and produce results, all the sides must pay great attention to the need to uphold the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people. To show that this has been taken into consideration, the sides must not waste their time on exerting pressure on the Palestinian side in order to make them return to the negotiating table, but they should spend that time on actually doing what can ensure the return of the Palestinians to the table. Without the Palestinians, it might be possible to conclude deals, but it would be impossible to achieve peace.

Continuation of Arab Boycott of Israel Urged

PM2502083493 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 23 Feb 93 p 11

[Editorial: "The Boycott Weapon and U.S. Pressures"]

[Text] The question of the Arab economic boycott of Israel was at the top of the list of issues raised by Warren Christopher with the Arab officials whom he met on his current tour. The U.S. secretary is one of the people most eager to see an end to that boycott and to see full normalization between the Arabs and the Israeli enemy.

The U.S. secretary definitely wants certain Arab states, particularly Kuwait, to "officially" begin to break the boycott laws in accordance with previous undertakings made at the time of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The indications are that many backstage meetings are being held between businessmen in the Gulf states and their Israeli counterparts but there is no tangible evidence of trade exchange between the two sides.

The new U.S. Administration holds the view that the right atmosphere should be created for peace and that the first step in that direction should be to end the boycott, open the borders, and normalize economic relations between the Arabs and Israel.

Before the Madrid conference, some Arab officials offered the boycott card in return for a freeze on settlement in the occupied Arab territories, but the Israeli Government refused even to discuss that proposal because it did not even dare to talk officially about freezing settlements because it feared public and parliamentary reaction. There was no accountability, however, for the Arabs who made that hasty and unfair proposal.

Now the U.S. secretary of state wants to end the boycott in return for nothing except some ambiguous promises that the bilateral negotiations would be resumed in Washington and that the U.S. Administration would be a full partner in these negotiations.

The fact which many are trying to forget these days is that the Arab boycott of Israel did not begin with the occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights nor did it come as a reaction to the Israeli settlement policy in the occupied territories. Therefore, ending the occupation and stopping settlement should not mean ending the boycott automatically.

At any rate, the boycott is not an Arab invention. It is an effective weapon used by all peoples of the world in their wars for the restoration of their usurped rights. The United States boycotted the racist regime in South Africa and used the same weapon against China. It has now imposed an unjust blockade against Iraq despite the fact that the latter has complied with 95 percent of the UN Security Council resolutions which are basically U.S. resolutions. The state of war still exists and Israel still occupies the Arab territories and it continues to violate UN resolutions and to murder children. The boycott weapon must remain the strongest weapon in Arab hands. Giving it up without the restoration of all the usurped Arab rights would be political as well as moral suicide.

Delegation Members Urged To Withdraw From Talks

TA2502184693 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] A rally was held today at Bi'r Zayt University by the Freedom and Independence Committees, which are opposed to the current peace process. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the participants harshly attacked the U.S. role in the peace process and Secretary of State Christopher's visit to the region. The participants called on members of the Palestinian delegation to withdraw from the peace talks and foil the autonomy plan.

'Arafat Retires PLA Commander in Jordan

TA2502134093 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 25 Feb 93 p 2

[By special AL-QUDS correspondent]

[Text] Amman—Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat has decided to pension off Major General Na'im al-Khatib [Abu-Ra'id], commander of the Palestine Liberation Army [PLA] in Jordan.

Informed sources have stressed to AL-QUDS that the order to retire al-Khatib was signed by the Palestinian president upon his return to Tunis and was immediately sent to Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, the Palestinian ambassador in Amman. The ambassador, however, did not convey the order because al-Khatib was hospitalized at Amman's al-Khalidi Hospital.

The same sources affirmed to AL-QUDS that Brigadier General Muhammad Qudsiyyah, who is PLA deputy commander in Jordan, will most likely be appointed as successor to al-Khatib.

In a related development, AL-QUDS has learned that a reconciliation has taken place between the Palestinian president and Abu-al-Tayyib, commander of Force-17, during a stopover in Cairo by president 'Arafat at the beginning of the month when he was on his way to Amman. 'Arafat took along Abu-al-Tayyib to Amman and then to Tunis, where he issued an order appointing Abu-al-Tayyib as national security adviser.

Algeria

Seven Military Men Sentenced To Death in Absentia

LD2602083493 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] The military court in Bechar Province, after hearing the trial today of a group of military men, has passed seven death sentences in absentia. Today's trial came after the recent trial of some 79 military men. A report on the trial from Mohamed Mukhtari:

[Mukhtari] After the trial last December of the 79 defendents at the military court in Bechar, the same court yesterday began the trial of 18 military defendents accused of not reporting about crimes harming the state's interests. While the recent trial lasted more than a week, this one did not last long. It was concluded the same day. The sentences were as follows:

The court has sentenced to death seven defendents while other defendents received sentences ranging from acquittal to five years actual imprisonment. The trial was held in the presence of the defense of the accused, consisting of four lawyers.

Egypt

U.S. Urged To Be 'Full Partner' in Talks

NC2602092093 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 26 Feb 93

[From the press review]

[Text] AL-JUMHURIYAH's editorial says that whatever results U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is carrying back to Washington, it is clear that he sensed an Arab consensus to link the Palestinian deportees issue with the resumption of the peace talks, particularly on the part of the Palestinian delegation. The delegation declared this openly following two meetings between the U.S. secretary and a group of Palestinian figures.

Palestinian sources said Christopher told Tel Aviv that Egypt insists that the deportees issue be resolved, linking this with the resumption of the talks.

AL-JUMHURIYAH adds: The peace negotiations will stumble over the deportees issue and the building of settlements. This requires that the United States fulfill its commitment, announced by Christopher, to play the role of a full partner in the talks. This is an old Egyptian demand, dating back to the 1970's, which was not properly fulfilled under the Nixon, Carter, and Reagan administrations. Will it be fulfilled under Clinton's administration?

U.S. 'Pivotal' Role in Peace Process Noted

NC2602065993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2237 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 25 Feb (MENA)—AL-AHRAM newspaper says that the fact that Israel was the last stop on U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour is an indirect admission that the ball is in Israel's court. The paper adds that the United States should make this disorderly player stick to the game's correct rules and fulfill its responsibilities.

In an editorial in its Friday [26 February] edition, the paper emphasizes the need to solve the Palestinian deportees problem according to international legitimacy before discussing the details of the peace process.

The paper notes that, if the United States refrains from playing an equitable role in this issue, negotiations will be meaningless because the U.S. role is pivotal whether regarding the deportees issue or the substance of the peace process.

Musa Sends Message to 'Arafat on Christopher Talks

NC2502151393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1411 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 25 Feb (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa received Palestinian ambassador Sa'id Kamal today. Musa asked Kamal to convey a message to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat on the outcome of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's talks with several Arab countries and Israel.

World Bank Agreement on Economic Reform Signed

NC2602090793 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 26 Feb 93

[From the press review]

[Text] AL-AHRAM newspaper reports that after several days of talks, Egypt and the World Bank on 25 February signed the second loan agreement pertaining to the structural reform of the Egyptian economy. Dr. Maurice Makramallah, minister of state for international cooperation, signed the agreement for Egypt. (Mr. Swolm) signed for the World Bank.

According to the agreement and with IMF concurrence, Egypt will receive the second installment of the loan, amounting to $150 million, and have 15 percent of its debts written off.

The agreement will be submitted next week to the World Bank's Board of Governors.

Muslim World's Expectations of U.S. Explored

93AE0308A Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic 30 Dec 92 p 53

[Article by Faruq al-Tawil: "Muslims Have No Pity on Themselves"]

[Text] What do the Muslims want from the American Superman? When will the Muslims know their objective? When will they know themselves, their potentials, their capabilities, and the extent of agreement among themselves? When will the Muslims know their friend and their foe? If this happens, then the Muslims will be able to stop torturing themselves and will pity themselves. But they are not trying. Even mere trying is bound to fail. They always insist on following the method that has always failed. They are like someone who dials the wrong phone number, and even though he is aware that the number is wrong, is amazed that nobody is answering.

The Muslims prefer to moan, to scream, and to slap their own faces. They cry over the loss of Islam and raise their hand to the heavens in complaint. And then once again, they extend their hand to their enemy to buy arms from him in order to fight one another. Then they vow and swear that this is a scheme, saying that they [the enemies] want us this way, that they do not want us to unite or even agree on a minimum way of life. Then they promise themselves paradise and threaten others with fire. They never tire of dialogue, discussion, and debate, to the extent that they called themselves a vocal phenomenon. If they are asked, "Why don't you get out of this whirlpool?" they immediately reply that this is a scheme. It is as if they will be sorry if the scheme fails. Do Muslims enjoy torturing themselves and crying over their losses? Do they become angry if others think of a solution to one of their problems? Isn't this perplexing?

If we try to sum up the discourse or the Islamic-Western dialogue in a couple of words, it would be like this: They [Muslims] say [to the West]: "Give to us, help us, and save us, but do not forget that you are infidels and hell is your destiny. It is better for you to come with us to heaven because we love you."

When the Iraq-Kuwait crisis broke out and the United States intervened, Muslims throughout the world shouted: "This is because of oil, and the United States is protecting oil." This is evident in the fact that it has let the fighting in Somalia to continue and allowed the country to die of starvation. Shall we abandon the Somalis because they are black and have no oil. When the crisis in Bosnia-Hercegovina broke out, the Muslims asked loudly: "Where is America? Why aren't they saving the Bosnians, whom the Serbians are slaughtering daily? We all competed with one another to depict the Bosnian tragedy. When some of the countries accepted to take Bosnian children, they [the Muslims] said the children would be converted to Christianity. They said the same thing when steps were taken to save the Somalis. "Beware, the missionaries are on the move! Why do you [Muslims] not move in order to save your Arab or Muslim brothers? Why do you leave them until they are on the verge of dying of starvation, thirst, and drought?" they would immediately respond, saying that this was a scheme. When America moved to help, they said that this is a European-American conflict over Somalia's underground wealth, that there is definite information that oil lies underneath Somalia. "The United States chose the easiest and most assured way by intervening in Somalia. Why didn't it intervene in Bosnia-Hercegovina? This is a conspiracy against Africa". The amazing thing is that the warring factions in Somalia found no better flag under which to make peace and smile other than the U.S. flag. Nevertheless, Muslim writers, intellectuals, and commentators are still regurgitating historical phrases: "[This is a] conspiracy against Islam. Islam is the target. Bosnia is on its deathbed, and the Serbs are trying to covert the Bosnians to Christianity." Yet nobody dares to say that maybe what is happening to the Muslims in Bosnia is a reaction to what is happening to Christians in some Islamic countries.

When will Pakistan be treated like Iran?

The Muslims wanted Bush to put the elections aside and take steps to rescue Somalia, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Burma, and others. At the same time they claim that what's happening in these countries is merely a Christian scheme against Muslims. To them, America is the disease and the cure. The United States was the one that funded the Afghan mojahedin war, first to fight Russia and then to fight among themselves. The United States was the one that created Khomeyni and expelled the Shah. It is protecting 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman and fostering Pakistan with its terrorist camps that operate within the U.S. sight and hearing, servicing them with its satellites, electronics, and funds in order to instill fear in the hearts of the Islamic countries. The United States was the one that brought Zia-ul-Haq to power and then removed him. It ordered killing Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. The United States was the one that incited the Hindus to set fire to Babri Mosque in India and the Jews to set fire to the al-Aqsa Mosque. Still, the United States is called upon to rescue the Bosnian Muslims, after having rescued the Muslims of Iraq, the Kurds, Kuwait, and Somalia. It is also called upon to fulfill its "gesture of goodwill turn."

The Muslims know well who creates problems for them. Foremost, they mention Iran, then Pakistan, Sudan, and Afghanistan. Nevertheless, no one has called Pakistan to be treated like Iran, despite the fact that all of the camps and terrorist ideas that came out from Pakistan were adopted by the "Afghan" groups whom it trained. These groups went back to their country in order to spread fear in the name of Islam, despite the fact that Pakistan is under U.S. patronage and is as dangerous as Iran. But Pakistan operates quietly, while Tehran ayatollahs are "loud mouthed." Will the Muslims, after all, get to know themselves? What do we, as Muslims, want? If we know that, we would know our enemy. But we do not, because we recoil from solving our problems and do not think of

how we can overcome our crisis. We enjoy this state of affairs and find something to talk and complain about.

Why the insistence on spreading Islam in the West?

The Muslims scream because Europe persecutes Islam, rejects the purdah, and kills the Bosnians. The Serbian leaders urge European leaders to protect Christianity. The United States does not wish to protect Muslims in Bosnia as it did in Kuwait and Somalia. The United States conspires with them in this respect. The proponents of these concepts forget that freedom of religion is guaranteed and that you may not interfere in the religious freedom of others. If we have fanatics in Islam, there are also fanatics in Christianity. It is natural for a Christian to defend his Christianity if he sees a Muslim attacking it. To every action, there is a reaction. I do not understand why some Muslims are keen on spreading Islam in Europe, and yet ask [the Europeans] to provide them with breakfast, lunch, and dinner and even find jobs for their children. And yet they brandish machine guns and accuse them of being infidels and atheists, deny them heaven, and threaten them with hell. Why do we interfere with the religious freedom of others? Why do we become angry if the others reciprocate with the same thing? Do we believe that we are the majority in the world, and so the world should follow us? In India, we found ourselves a minority despite the fact that there are 120 millions of us there, that is the equivalent of Muslims in all the Arab world. In India, we are considered a minority and are treated like one. Why do we antagonize others and increase our enemies with our behavior? And yet, we ask the American forces to proclaim embracing Islam, to believe in God and his Prophet, and to rescue Bosnia before rescuing Somalia. It is as if America has no interests in Europe and there are no conflicts between it and the emerging blocs in Europe, and it does not take Russia, Germany, or France into account. For what purpose? What exactly do we want, and when will we know ourselves, so that we will know our enemy and determine our path?

Libya

Commentary on 'Conspiracy' Against Arabs

LD2502145993 Tripoli JANA in English 1428 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Tripoli, an-Nawar [February] 25, JAMAHARIYA NEWS AGENCY—'AL-ZAHF AL-AKHDAR' (THE GREEN MARCH) confirmed in today's issue that the Arabs are facing an ongoing conspiracy, the extent of which has not yet been revealed. The only way out is for the Arabs to be aware of what is goipg on and act according to their national interest. An article published under the heading 'The Time For Fatal Contrasts' said that the current Arab impotence, both manifest and unmanifest, is not in the Arabs favour on either a national or regional level.

The Arabs do not have a real say in resolutions and are therefore always badly and negatively affected. Even traditional relationships, which some describe as historical, did not achieve that level of respect which is normally [word indistinct] between two states, for the Arabs and their countries.

The Arabs always represent the weaker party in the equation of international relations. Arab impotence is crystal clear in the issue of the Arab Zionist conflict. More than 50 international resolutions have been passed against the Zionists and not even one has been implemented even though the Arabs are engulfed in the embarrassment caused by the Zionists' intransigence. But the Arabs implement all UN resolutions even the ones which treat them unfairly and they do nothing but kow-tow towards the illusion of international legitimacy.

The problem is therefore caused by a discrepancy in Arab life which has become hostage to the present Arab situation with all its intricacies. An impasse has been created and even if they try to extract themselves from it they are blocked by the veto. Parties to international resolutions are always taking part in the international scenario which has no interest in the growth of the Arab body, but has a lot of interest in keeping it impotent and weak. The curious thing is the Arabs' oversight of this fact which is thrown upon them by the strategy of aggression with all the consecutive acts in which Arabs take part against other Arabs, deluding themselves that this is directed against one Arab country and not against all Arabs.

As the parts of the play are repeated whole nations will be totally paralysed and weakened as the countries are selected one by one before all the world and in front of all the other Arab states, their governments and their armies.

The Arabs are passing through an ongoing conspiracy from which they will not emerge unless they become aware and seek their national interests, within the framework of the natural, national pattern for the Arab nation.

Morocco

Prime Minister Holds Banquet for EC's Delors

LD2602015993 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 2300 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Excerpts] This evening, Prime Minister Mohamed Karim Lamrani gave a dinner banquet in honor of Mr. Jacques Delors, president of EC Commission. [passage omitted]

At the beginning of the banquet, the prime minister made an address in which he welcomed Mr. Jacques Delors and his accompanying delegation; he pointed out the strides which have been made in Moroccan-European relations and asserted Morocco's readiness, under the leadership of His Majesty King Hassan II, may

God grant him victory, to continue the consolidation of the bonds of cooperation between the two parties. [passage omitted]

Mr. Jacques Delors pointed out in his speech that his visit to Morocco fell within the framework of efforts under way to strengthen relations between the EEC and the Kingdom of Morocco in light of the major development being witnessed by the world, particularly at the economic and political levels. Mr. Jacques Delors recalled that Europe was going through an important phase in the process of building its unity, pointing out the EC's eagerness to bolster cooperation with the Mediterranean countries, particularly Morocco, which constitutes a showcase for such a cooperation. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Fourth Round of Hala'ib Talks To Be Held

NC2602112593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1048 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] Khartoum, 26 Feb (MENA)—The Egyptian and Sudanese sides have agreed to hold the fourth round of talks on the Hala'ib issue in Cairo. The date will be set soon.

This came in a press statement issued today at the end of the Joint Egyptian-Sudanese Committee's four-day meetings, during which seven working sessions were held. The last session started at 2200 yesterday and ended at 0430 today.

The press statement noted that the talks were held in an atmosphere of seriousness and frankness commensurate with the special eternal relations between Sudan and Egypt. The committee made sincere efforts while dealing with the various topics under discussion. Each side expressed its opinion in complete frankness and clarity with regard to the issues discussed. The Egyptian and Sudanese sides demonstrated their eagerness to promote the common interests of the two fraternal peoples.

Ambassador Muhab Muqbil, assistant foreign minister and head of the Egyptian side to the talks, has told a MENA correspondent that the committee's meetings were held in an atmosphere of amity and its discussions were characterized with seriousness and frankness. He said that the committee discussed the aspects of dispute between the two sides in good spirits. Muqbil noted that all aspects of the Hala'ib issue were dealt with in a spirit of brotherhood and real friendship which binds the fraternal Egyptian and Sudanese peoples.

The statement pointed out that the Egyptian delegation postponed its departure for another day in response to a request by the Sudanese side in order to conduct further consultations. The Egyptian side invited the Sudanese delegation to attend the committee's next round of talks in Cairo to complete the discussions.

The Egyptian side will leave Khartoum this afternoon.

Al-Bashir Confirms Meetings With Garang

EA2502193393 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 0530 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council and the Council of Ministers, has confirmed that arrangements for the second Abuja negotiations will be completed as soon as possible. His excellency added that preliminary meetings between the government's delegation and John Garang will precede the main meetings. He confirmed that contacts are continuing with the other sides in Nairobi.

Official Denies Ethnic Cleansing Reports

EA2602115393 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Dr. (Kabashur) Kuku, chairman of the Social Affairs Committee in the Transitional National Assembly, refuted, during his meeting on 25 February with a visiting press delegation, Western newspaper reports about ethnic cleansing in Jibal al-Nubah [Nubah mountains]. He confirmed the support of the sons of Jibal al-Nubah for the revolution, and their effort to establish peace in the area. His Excellency reviewed current economic policies in the country, and the efforts made to cushion the social effects of these policies.

Al-Bashir Delegates Tasks to Deputy

EA2602121693 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Excerpt] Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council [RCC] and of the Council of Ministers, issued a decree on 25 February delegating his tasks and powers stipulated in the Fourth Constitutional Decree of 1991 on supervising the Federal Government Office, to Major General Zubayr Muhammad Salih, deputy chairman of the RCC and of the Council of Ministers. [passage omitted]

Al-Bashir Receives Upper Nile State Delegation

EA2602120993 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1315 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council and of the Council of Ministers, has received a people's delegation from Upper Nile State, led by (Tuwet Kand), which supports peace in the state. His excellency received a document pledging loyalty from the masses of the state.

Lt. Gen. al-Bashir affirmed that peace represents the basic aim of the revolution, explaining that the splits within the rebel movement were the result of the conviction by most of the rebellion's fighters and commanders of the revolution's earnest desire to achieve peace, and to adopt the recommendations of the national dialogue

conference for peace. Lt. Gen. al-Bashir affirmed that the internal move, through people's bases, forced the rebel movement to sit down to negotiations with the Sudanese Government.

He pointed out that the southerners were the ones who were being harmed by the continuation of the war, and the arbitrary practices of the rebels. The chairman praised the current efforts by the People's Salvation Committee in Upper Nile State to unite the internal front. He declared his full support for the delegation's efforts toward achieving success in its search for peace.

Members of the delegation affirmed that their efforts to persuade the rebels had achieved some success. They asked for moral support to enable them to continue the people's diplomacy in Upper Nile State in order to achieve peace.

The document presented by the Upper Nile delegation called on the rebel movement to release the children it had detained. It confirmed the support of the masses, from all different sectors, for the revolution, and for its programs aimed at the establishment of peace and the implementation of federal rule.

Kuwait

Prime Minister Comments on Iraqi 'Intentions'

LD2502131193 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Shaykh Sa'ad al-Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, heir apparent and prime minister, has said the Iraqi regime not only aimed at occupying Kuwait, but its aggressive intentions targeted the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. Shaykh Sa'ad al-Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah stressed that one must not be tricked by what is reaching our ears on the move of some countries as though the Iraqi regime has no aggressive intentions or never carried out unjust aggression against Kuwait.

In an interview with AL-WATAN newspaper that was published today, his highness the heir apparent and prime minister said it is difficult to cohabit with the current Iraqi regime, and what is needed is to accommodate ourselves to live with the present situation. He pointed out that after the defeat of the Iraqi forces in the war of liberation, Kuwait waited for some sort of results, but these results did not take place for several reasons. Shaykh Sa'ad al-Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah reminded countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council on the necessity of intensifying cooperation and coordination between them. His highness the heir apparent and prime minister mentioned that there are continuing contacts between Kuwait and arms-producing countries to complete providing the army with modern equipment and arms, but he stressed that there are no countries that can provide Kuwait with what it needs within days. He pointed out that there are special security agreements for the defense of Kuwait with the United States, France, and Britain that oblige these countries to speedily cooperate in the defense of Kuwait.

On the Damascus Declaration and what is being circulated about its fate, Shaykh Sa'ad al-Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah expressed his optimism on finding a formula to implement soon what came in the Damascus Declaration.

His highness the heir apparent and prime minister stressed that it is in the interest of countries in the region to cooperate with Iran, but this cooperation must be without intervention in our internal affairs or our intervention in its internal affairs.

On the countries that supported the Iraqi invasion, Shaykh Sa'ad al-Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah said the officials in the countries that supported the invasion must have the absolute courage to confess their mistakes to Kuwait.

On the condition of internal affairs, his highness the heir apparent and prime minister pointed out that if mistrust continues between the members of the two authorities—the executive and legislative—then Kuwait will not reap any positive results, clarifying that there are no longer any members of the government and members of the legislative authority; all are in the same boat.

At the end of his interview, Shaykh Sa'ad al-Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah pointed out that the country faces a lot of tasks, responsibilities, and burdens, the most prominent being protecting the security of the country and the citizens.

Army Chief of Staff Tenders Resignation

LD2502180493 Rabat MAP in Arabic 1558 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Jeddah, 25 Feb (MAP)—AL-HAYAT, citing Kuwaiti sources described as being well-informed, reported that the Kuwaiti Army Chief of General Staff, Major-General Jabir al-Khalid al-Sabah, has tendered his resignation to Defense Minister Shaykh 'Ali al-Sabah.

The newspaper said in its edition, issued today in the Gulf, that the Kuwaiti minister has turned down this resignation, pointing out that Major-General Jabir has stopped carrying out his official activities as chief of staff.

The newspaper has not reported from the sources on which it has based itself the reasons for this resignation, reminding that Major-General Jabir al-Khalid al-Sabah was occupying the post of deputy chief of General Staff when the Gulf War broke out, and that he was practically the actual commander of the army.

Kuwaiti Oil Minister on New OPEC Quotas

PM2602093693 Paris LIBERATION in French 22 Feb 93 p10

[Interview with Kuwaiti Oil Minister 'Ali al-Baghli by Christophe Boltanski and Pascal Riche in Paris; date not given, first paragraph is editorial introduction]

[Text] The OPEC meeting ended last week with a laborious compromise. Once again Kuwait was accused of being a troublemaker. Moreover, the markets have not reacted to the decision made in Vienna to reduce oil production in the second quarter by one million barrels per day. On Friday, Iranian Oil Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'i blamed the emirate for a new drop in prices. 'Ali al-Baghli, his Kuwaiti counterpart, responded to these accusations on a stopover in Paris.

[LIBERATION] For four days in Vienna you resisted your partners' pressures. Then you approved an agreement which you described as "unfair." What happened?

[Al-Baghli] It was a very tough conference. From the start the discussions related to the question of Kuwait. During the previous conference last November, Kuwait obtained a production quota of 1.5 million barrels per day, but it was allowed to produce more as soon as possible.

Our production therefore increased, it reached around 2 million barrels per day this month. We therefore asked to negotiate on the basis of this level of production of 2 million barrels. But our partners found that difficult to accept. The total amount of the reduction in production envisaged by OPEC had been fixed at one million barrels per day compared with November's quota. By adding the additional quantities introduced onto the market by Kuwait since November, the sacrifice to be shared was no longer 1 million but 1.5 million barrels per day. Who was going to tolerate that effort? Nobody was willing. All the pressure was therefore exerted on Kuwait.

[LIBERATION] What arguments did your colleagues put forward?

[Al-Baghli] They told me: "It is not true that you have reached these 2 million barrels per day." I replied: "If I have not reached these 2 million, I would like not to participate in the agreement: If you are right, that will not affect the market!" So they added: "Everybody must sign the agreement or there will be no agreement. If a country leaves the conference, the price of crude oil would drop by between $2 and $3." The minister of one of the region's big oil producers threatened me by saying: "If you refuse, I will leave immediately, go and see the journalists and attack you politically, explaining that Kuwait is responsible for a great loss for 11 countries." That is the situation in which I was....

Then they divided up new reductions, a little here and there: a total of 100,000 barrels per day and they gave them to Kuwait: "Your quota will be 1.6 million (1.5 million from November plus the 100,000 barrels offered—LIBERATION editor's note). It was an additional sacrifice for them. I said: "I accept, only to show our desire to cooperate. Once again we are making a sacrifice but on one condition, that we have a guarantee of our rights in the future." Therefore a paragraph was introduced guaranteeing Kuwait the same quota as the countries with a "similar production capacity, historical market share, and quota." We had 9 hours of discussion on this paragraph alone....

[LIBERATION] The prices have not improved. How do you explain the lack of any market reaction?

[Al-Baghli] We must wait: It is only after 1 March that the OPEC countries will have to respect the new quotas. I hope that everybody will then honor his pledges, and I am optimistic.

[LIBERATION] If one of your partners did not respect the Vienna agreement, would you automatically return to your production level of 2 million barrels per day?

[Al-Baghli] I made that sacrifice for the good of the other 11 members. But if the agreement is violated, whoever is the perpetrator, it would become null and void. If others cheat, the whole world will know that I have honored my pledge.

[LIBERATION] You are well aware that quotas are never perfectly respected....

[Al-Baghli] This time, they maintain that that will not be the case. And there is (he laughed—LIBERATION editor's note) a monitoring committee. Wait and see.

[LIBERATION] Do you have the impression that you have become OPEC's black sheep?

[Al-Baghli] More like the sacrificial lamb.

[LIBERATION] Does your quota enable you to face your budget problems?

[Al-Baghli] No. We are going to experience serious problems. But I hope that we will survive. We will make budget cuts here and there, and we will try to win over the population and parliament.

[LIBERATION] During this summit, we witnessed a rapprochement between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Does this Riyadh-Tehran axis worry you?

[Al-Baghli] Quite the reverse: This rapprochement is positive. The region's oil ministers have agreed on the need to develop bilateral relations. We will also meet before each OPEC meeting in order to try to find an area of agreement and not expose our differences to the whole world.

[LIBERATION] Including Iran and Iraq?

[Al-Baghli] Iran will take part in the meeting. As for Iraq.... It is currently out of the picture.

[LIBERATION] Are you already contemplating the effects on OPEC of lifting the embargo imposed on Iraq?

[Al-Baghli] It is an extremely delicate problem which the organization must examine now. I think it will go through a very difficult period.

[LIBERATION] You met with the managers of Elf and Total. Can they hope to sign contracts with Kuwait shortly?

[Al-Baghli] The discussions have made progress. We have examined all possible aspects of cooperation in the oil sphere. We will meet again. They will make new proposals to us and I hope that something will emerge from all that.

[LIBERATION] The French want to participate in the modernization of the al-Ahmadi refinery.

[Al-Baghli] That is under discussion. Negotiations are also under way in the sphere of technical assistance, and oil research....

[LIBERATION] Are the negotiations started by Total and Elf with Iraq likely to influence these negotiations?

[Al-Baghli] Everybody is safeguarding his interests. But these people must realize that they also have interests in

our country and throughout the Gulf. Not just in Iraq. It is up to them to make a wise decision.

Saudi Arabia

Iraqi Rights Group Asks Fahd Not To Normalize Ties

LD2502140393 Riyadh SPA in English 1237 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] London, Feb 25, SPA—Secretary General of the Iraqi Human Rights Organization Dr Sahib al-Hakeem has requested custodian of the two holy mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-Al-'Aziz not to normalize relations with the Iraq regime.

In his cable to the monarch, which bears signature of more than 100 persons representing Iraqis living abroad, al-Hakeem said the Iraqi regime has been violating human rights inside and outside Iraq.

The Iraqi people have been facing the worst kinds of ordeals in their history, he said while calling the monarch to extend support to the Iraqi people. The widows, orphans and the arrested people in the prisons of the Iraqi regime are looking for your contribution as well as the contribution of all liberals in the world to lift the injustice and persecution befallen on them, he said in the cable.

The cable urged the countries of the world and in particular the permanent members of the UN's Security Council to judge the Iraqi president and his gang for war crimes and violation of the human rights in an unprecedented manner in the history.

Those who try to normalize relations with Saddam Husayn will be held moral, political and human responsibility towards the Iraqi people and the other nations who were victims of the crimes committed by this regime, added the cable.

'Fresh Steps' Expected From U.S. To Push Peace

LD2602115993 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0317 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Excerpt] Riyadh 26 Feb (SPA)—[passage omitted]

AL-MADINAH wrote under the headline "The vistas for peace following Christopher's tour": U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has concluded his eight-day tour to the Middle East region, during which he met with all parties and acquainted himself with the dimension of the problems as well as the vistas for resolving them. He also heard the Kingdom's views on the Middle East problems and acquainted himself with its principled stances demanding the right of the Palestinian people to exercise their legitimate claims, including their claim to a homeland, the return of the deportees without any conditions, an end to the occupation of the Arab territories and noninterference with Jerusalem's Arab-Islamic character.

The daily pointed out, furthermore, now that Christopher has acquainted himself with the development of the situation following his tour, that there is hope now of the outcome of such a tour once the American Administration, which has already drawn up proposals that include measures for a speedy return of all deportees to their homes and forcing Israel not to carry out further deportation in future, has studied his findings. The newspaper concluded its editorial saying that Washington has shown once more, following Christopher's tour to the Middle East region, its interest in the agenda for peace in this strategic region. Therefore, we should expect in next few days fresh steps by the U.S. Administration to give new momentum to the peace process.

Kuwaiti Ambassador Praises Saudi Support

LD2502133593 Riyadh SPA in English 1249 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Riyadh, Feb 25, SPA—Kuwaiti Ambassador to the Kingdom 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Bakr has highlighted the pioneering role played by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia under the leadership of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz in the liberation of Kuwait. In a press statement here last night al-Bakr said the Kuwaitis will never forget the brave stand of King Fahd during the Arab Gulf crisis caused by the occupation of Kuwait.

On the other hand, al-Bakr underscored the importance of the Gulf Cooperation Council and said the GCC leaders are keen in enhancing their cooperation.

Yemen

Salih Congratulates Kuwaiti Amir on National Day

JN2502183393 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Presidential Council Chairman brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih has sent a cable of congratulations to Kuwaiti Amir His Highness Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah on the National Day of the fraternal State of Kuwait.

* Slow Registration Threatens Elections Results

93AE0359B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 16 Feb 93 p 4

[Article by Hamud Munsir: "Large-Scale Consultations To Organize International Supervision"]

[Text] Sanaa—While the period of voter registration nears its end, which is 19 February, statistical reports by the Yemeni Election Committee indicate that by yesterday, nearly 1.5 million male and female, mostly male, citizens have registered to vote.

It has been noticed that in the past two days, greater numbers of citizens have been turning up at the registration centers despite the ambiguity engulfing the political alliances map, which is expected to become clear in the next few weeks. The average number of registered citizens per district in the various governorates has not exceeded 4,819 male and female voters.

The capital municipality, Sanaa, ranks first, with the average number of registered voters amounting to 7,316 voters per district. Ta'izz Governorate ranks second, with an average number of 6,953 male and female voters per district, and Aden ranks third, with an average number of 6,167 voters per district.

Statistics indicate that 44 percent, or 6 million people out of Yemen's total population of 14 million, are of legal voting age. However, estimates by election committee officials indicate that by the end of the registration period, the number of registered voters will not exceed 2 million. In the opinion of the observers, this is a meager figure that does not reflect the dimensions of past expectations.

Officials of the Yemeni Election Committee have attributed the small turnout at the registration centers to the late arrival of the women's committees at these centers and to some technical difficulties that the committees' have encountered in their work, in addition to heavy rainfall in most southern and eastern governorates, which impeded registration for four days.

The election committee holds the political parties and the official, party, and private media responsible for failing to launch concerted information campaigns at the start of the registration period to urge the citizens to register to vote.

As for preparations for the next phases, the Higher Election Committee has received letters from the Yemeni Human Rights Organization and from the National Organization for Free Elections requesting that their representatives be permitted to enter and be present at the polling centers to observe the progress of the voting process, the vote count, and the announcement of results.

The National Organization for Free Elections, headed by Mustafa Ahmad Muhammad Nu'man, the son of struggler Ahmad Muhammad Nu'man, is engaged in concerted contacts with the elections committee and with the political parties to enable it to perform the task of overseeing the elections in cooperation with international observers. Thomas (Melia), director of the program of the Democratic National Institute for International Affairs, who visited Yemen recently at the head of a delegation from the institute, told Magistrate 'Abd-al-Karim al-'Arashi, chairman of the Yemeni Elections Committee, that the institute has received a request from the National Organization for Free Elections to train a number of Yemeni volunteers to oversee the elections. Melia added that the institute plans to respond positively to the Yemeni organization's request.

Melia said that he is fully convinced that Mustafa Ahmad Nu'man, the organization chairman, plans to mobilize support for free and true elections. Melia expressed the hope that the Democratic National Institute will organize the first training program for the national organization by the end of this month of February and that the organization will be able to work with the elections committee's technical subcommittee.

It is worth noting that the elections committee has referred the national organization's request to Attorney 'Abd-al-Fattah al-Basir, head of the Higher Election Committee's legal subcommittee, to respond to it.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that the Higher Election Committee discussed the request at the meeting it held two days ago and that only three committee members approved it. Some members rejected the request, and others expressed reservations about it.

Elections committee sources expect the issue to be raised again after further consultations between party representatives and committee members.

Earlier, Yemeni authorities had welcomed the dispatch of international observers.

John Bruton, Irish opposition leader and parliament member who visited Sanaa recently, expressed his happiness with the Yemeni position. In a letter he addressed to Magistrate al-'Arashi on 30 January, Bruton said that the Yemen election system is compatible with international criteria.

He also noted that the Democratic National Institute, in cooperation with its Republican counterpart, seeks to organize a multinational delegation to observe the elections on 27 April. He said that an international observation program requires the dispatch of missions prior to the elections and that one of these missions may arrive at the end of this month and another at the end of March. A bigger delegation is to follow at the time of the elections.

The Irish deputy asserted that the International Election Systems Organization, which is located in the United States, and the Election Reform Society, which is located in Britain, are prepared to offer technical aid and the facilities necessary to ensure successful, free, and impartial elections.

Paper on Reasons for Publication of Saddam Meetings

JN2602110593 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0900 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Feb (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH has asserted that Iraq's commitment to the principles of a just peace stems from a firm position and an established, principled conviction aimed at spreading harmony among all people, free of all forms of hegemony, aggressiveness, and cheap profiteering.

In an article published here today, the paper, mouthpiece of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, says: The policy followed by Iraq stems from a single essence, not from a duality of positions. There are no declared stands and other covert, contradictory ones.

The paper asserts that this policy is governed by a high degree of morality, since integrity in terms of the directions it follows constitutes the common dominator in all that has happened.

The paper notes the publication of the minutes of President Saddam Husayn's meetings with a number of Arab and foreign officials after the glorious Day of the Call [Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990]. The paper says the publication of the documents of the major duel, the Mother of Battles, comes to confirm that in his wise management of this duel, President Saddam Husayn was relying only on the strength of the people and their deep faith, combined reserves, renewable spiritual power, and inclination toward justice and right regardless of sacrifice.

The paper emphasizes that out of faith and that spiritual reservoir, the margin of hesitation and fear did not exist in the Iraqi positions that coincided with the events of the duel.

The paper points out that the publication of the minutes, documents, and analyses has shown the level of fear, confusion, lack of responsibility, overlooking of facts, and deterioration in vision reached by those who chose to stand against Iraq.

Saddam Tours Enterprise Hit During Attack

JN2602092793 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0845 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Excerpts] Baghdad, 26 Feb (INA)—Mujahid President Saddam Husayn at 0100 today visited the al-Nida' State Enterprise, targeted by the enemies in their recent aggressive attack.

His excellency was briefed on the continuous efforts made by mujahidin construction workers day and night to rebuild the enterprise. He was also briefed on the products of some of the sections that have already been rebuilt. The president blessed these efforts. [passage omitted]

The president was accompanied on his visit to the enterprise by fighter Lieutenant General 'Amir Muhammad Rashid al-'Ubaydi, director of the Military Industrialization Organization.

Nicaragua's Ortega Continues Visit to Baghdad

Praises Saddam's Confidence

JN2502214093 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Former Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega has stated that President Saddam Husayn is a leader who enjoys unflinching determination in terms of struggle and sacrifices to achieve the objectives of his people and overcome the suffering caused by the blockade.

At a press conference attended by local reporters, he said: Two years have passed since I last met with Iraqi President Saddam Husayn. I found out that he still possesses his past confidence and will. President Saddam Husayn also has faith in inevitable victory and in overcoming difficulties facing his people and restoring stability, calm, and peace to the region.

Daniel Ortega added that the blockade imposed on the people of Iraq is aberrant and illogical, noting that it has greatly affected Iraq and the region as a whole.

The former Nicaraguan president expressed admiration for the Iraqi people and leadership. He said: The construction campaign launched by the Iraqis following the aggression has proven their ability to defy the blockade and foil the conspiracy being implemented against their country.

He noted that Iraq has spared no effort throughout its struggling march to drive home to colonialist powers the fact that their will and hegemony cannot be imposed on free nations.

Daniel Ortega urged nations struggling for their freedom and aspiring for a decent life to unite and support each other to weaken U.S. hegemony and thwart its schemes all over the world. He also denounced double standards being pursued by the United Nations toward world issues, particularly toward the Palestine question, contrary to international charters and norms.

Meets With Tariq 'Aziz

JN2502215293 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2035 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Baghdad, 25 Feb (INA)—Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and Revolution Command Council member, today met with Daniel Ortega, leader of the Sandinist National Liberation Front and former president of Nicaragua. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf.

Tariq 'Aziz reviewed relations with the Sandinist Front and ways of enhancing them in the interest of the two peoples and countries.

'Aziz also gave a comprehensive assessment of damages Iraq had sustained as a result of the unjust 30-state aggression and the comprehensive blockade. He also spoke about the reconstruction campaign which restored many vital facilities in Iraq.

'Aziz praised the efforts made by Ortega in support of Iraq and its unyielding people. For his part, Ortega praised Iraq's steadfastness and confrontation of the aggression forces. He also urged ending the blockade on Iraq.

The meeting was also attended by George Hallaq, Nicaragua's ambassador in the Near East and Athens [name and title as received].

Kurdish Leader Says Saddam Dialogue 'Maneuver'

NC2502183693 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Brother Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, met with Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam for the fourth time yesterday. They discussed the situation in Iraq. Brother Talabani also met with representatives of the Iraqi opposition in Syria to persuade them to join the Unified Iraqi National Congress.

In a statement to REUTER yesterday, brother Talabani described Saddam Husayn's attempts to renew contacts and resume dialogue with the Kurdish parties as a maneuver. Saddam cannot be trusted, he said. Talabani also told REUTER that he asked the Syrian leaders to reopen the border with Iraqi Kurdistan, which has been closed for about six months. He said the Syrian brothers promised to study the request.

SAIRI Said To Rejoin Unified National Congress

NC2502154093 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] A Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] spokesman said the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI], led by Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, has rejoined the Unifed Iraqi National Congress after withdrawing early in February. The spokesman said that the decision was made after PUK Leader Jalal Talabani's talks with Syrian officials and Iraqi opposition leaders in Damascus.

The spokesman said Talabani held talks with Syrian Vice President Khaddam on relations between the Syrian Government and the Iraqi opposition, as well as the situation in Iraq. In his talks with Iraqi opposition leaders, Talabani focused on persuading them to join the opposition organizations formed during the Salah-al-Din conference held by the Unified Iraqi National Congress.

Western Countries Said Barring Medicine Imports

JN2402151893 Baghdad INA in English 1400 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Baghdad, Feb. 24, INA—Dr Umid Midhat Mubarak, minister of health said the countries of aggression have refused to give Iraq permission to import necessary medicines, lab examination substances and spares for medical appliances.

In a statement published today by AL-JUMHURIYAH daily of Iraq, Dr. Mubarak added those countries also banned the import of ammonium nitrate necessary for manufacturing nitrous oxide used in anesthesia at the excuse that those well-know substances can be used for military purposes.

The minister said, the Sanctions Committee has ordered blocking any assistance for reconstructing Iraq's syringe factory completely destroyed during the acts of sabotage following the gulf war.

The minister pointed out that Security Council Resolution Number 687 had exempted food and medicine from blockade measures, stressing that the chairman of the committee has on May 1991 instructed all countries to use Iraq's frozen assets to cover expenses of purchase contracts supplying Iraq with food and medicine.

The minister said foreign companies have, under pressure from their governments, delayed implementation of deals despite the country's urgent need for such substances.

The minister added some of the purchase order for medicines, vaccines and lab examination substances have already been paid for before 2-8-1990 but companies have simply refused to supply them to Iraq.

The minister confirmed that 9 million dollars worth of material from 16 Western countries including America, Britain and France, were not shipped to Iraq.

Defense Minister Meets Jordan's Moral Director

JN2502153793 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1350 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Baghdad, 25 Feb (INA)—Staff General 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, Revolution Command Council member and defense minister, today received Staff Brigadier General Qasim Muhammad Salih, director of Moral Guidance at the Jordanian General Command.

The defense minister praised Jordan's genuine pan-Arab position which was demonstrated by the support of the fraternal Jordanian people and government for Iraq during the great confrontation of the immortal Mother of Battles, in defense of the glorious Arab nation's dignity and legitimate aspirations for a free, decent life.

Staff Brig. Gen. Qasim Muhammad Salih praised the pan-Arab role of the genuine Iraqi Arab Army during battles with the Zionist entity.

He added: We in Jordan take pride in the high morale, pan-Arab sense, and spirit of challenge demonstrated by the steadfast Iraqi people. He pointed out that anyone who visits Iraq will be astounded by the achievements of its sons during the reconstruction phase and their resolve to carry out agricultural and industrial plans despite the unjust blockade. He added that Iraq's self- reliance buttresses independent Arab decisionmaking.

Staff Brig. Gen. Qasim Muhammad Salih said that Jordan's position stems from an Arab duty and should be adopted by every zealous Arab. He also asked God to preserve the Iraqi people and their sacred soil, under the leadership of President Saddam Husayn, so that Iraq will remain a lofty Arab bastion.

Ministry Urges Merchants To Abide by Import Rules

JN2402170393 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 22 Feb 93 p 8

[By Salah al-'Abd]

[Excerpts] Baghdad—The Ministry of Trade has renewed its call on merchants and commercial store owners in Baghdad and the governorates to fully abide by restrictions and regulations concerning the import of permitted and banned goods. [passage omitted]

It is noted that the Revolution Command Council has issued a decree that considers dealing in or possessing goods that have been removed from the import list without outside transfer for commercial purposes a crime of economic sabotage during a time of war. The perpetrator of this crime will be executed or sentenced to life or at least 15 years in prison with a fine twice the value of the seized goods, which will be confiscated and become the property of the state.

* 1993 'Year of Final Erosion of Embargo'

93AE0289A Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 2 Jan 93 p 1

[Article: "1992 Was Year of Reconstruction and Rivers and 1993 Is Year of Final Victory and Erosion of Embargo"]

[Text] A happy new year to Iraq, with God's effusive will, with the resolve of struggler Saddam Husayn, our historic leader, and with the giving of Iraq's glorious sons.

May God preserve Iraq, its leader, and its people. The year 1992 was the year of reaffirming survival and the loftiness of the edifice. In 1992, which we bade farewell yesterday, Iraq's leader signed the birth certificates for palaces of civilization and for an edifice that rises lofty and proud in every part of Iraq. It was the year of building and miracle-making and the year of the lofty edifice. The strugglers and knights of construction inscribed their able names on bridges, factories, oil refineries, power plants, communication and water facilities, and on service and production sites that were born day after day in 1992. Our days were days of building and reconstruction that restored to our life its glory and joy and restored self-confidence to the Arabs who have seen Iraq—the mother-of-battles Iraq—carry on with its life, stand fast, and advance, overcoming all of the impossible obstacles that have been imposed on it by the devastating 30-ally aggression that has sought to kill life in Iraq through the blockade and the starvation wars.

The year 1992 witnessed Iraq's triumph over the partition plots. The stand taken by the united people has reflected the will of the single Iraq. Thus, the U.S.-imposed parallels and the endeavors of the spies who have worn the [hard] hats of the ill-reputed inspection teams have collapsed.

The year 1992 has been and continues to be the year of rivers, the year of accomplishment of the Saddam River, the year of launching the Mother of Battles River, and the year of glory made complete. In all parts of the world, rivers are God's gift. With the completion of the Saddam River, they are in Iraq the gift of the leadership, of will, and of resolve under the most difficult circumstances and the most serious challenges.

We defeated the impossible repeatedly every day. We defeated it by perpetuating life and by promoting the reconstruction ever since the construction of the Bridge of Defiance, the al-Jumhuriyah Bridge to Saddamiyat al-Karakh, and the construction of imposing structures and bridges, such as the Saddam River and the Saddam Tower. Saddam is the name of our will and our leadership. Even more, it is the name of our state of existence and it has amazed the world and has given us the stability of certainty and faith and has infused us with pride and confidence.

A happy and victorious year to our Saddam.

A happy and glorious year to our Iraq.

Iraq has surpassed the year of reconstruction and rivers. God willing, Iraq will surpass 1992 in 1993 and will turn 1993 into the year that reconstruction is completed and the year of the final erosion of the blockade. Here we are recording our presence in the first day of our new year. We are recording it in reconstruction and development and in endurance and insistence on our rights through the great unity of our will and leadership and unity of the leader with his great people.

How many foes have we defeated in 1992?

How many victories have we scored in 1992?

We have recorded our will in steadfastness, development, and reconstruction. Our days are measured by accomplishments. Bravo and eternal glory to this gigantic Iraq. Honor and glory to Iraq's people, the struggling and building people. Lasting honor, glory, and victory to Iraq's symbol, Saddam Husayn.

May it be a year of utter glory to our Iraq and to our Saddam.

Detailed List of Banned Merchandise Provided

93AE0297A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 9 Dec 93 pp 12, 13

[Roster of goods "banned from circulation as of 10 December 1992"]

[Text] First: List of imported goods for which foreign exchange should not be used. These are not subject to customs duties, national defense taxes, or any other duties.

1. Consumer Goods

- Cheese—all varieties
- Millet seeds, grain or powdered—all varieties, for all uses
- Table salt
- Cigarettes, onions, tomatoes

2. Building Materials

- Steel rods
- Water tanks
- Ready-made wooden doors
- Asbestos pipe and accessories (elbows and connections)

3. Agricultural-Related Materials

- Mineral salts for agricultural use
- Egg trays
- Cartons for transporting eggs
- Crates
- Frozen chicken
- Coops for transporting chickens and chicks

4. Industrial-Related Materials

- Printers ink—all varieties used for printing
- Dyed furs
- Ready-made men's and women's clothing for all ages, including used clothes (by the carton), with the exception of baby clothes and men's and women's underwear (undershirts, underpants, socks, bras, corsets, slips, and cologne).
- Waterproof materials—impermeable garments, and tarpaulins
- Glass
- Metal and nonmetal bells for bicycles and other uses
- Plastic bags

5. Pharmaceutical and Medical Supplies

- Instruments for treating heart ailments, diabetes, and blood pressure.

Banned Goods

Second: List of goods for which foreign exchange should not be used and which are subject to customs law and customs tariffs.

1. Foodstuffs

- Starch
- Sesame oil
- Raisins
- Chemical (seasonings) and aromatic flavorings as primary ingredients for foodstuffs
- Baking powder—as a primary ingredient used in making cookies and pastries
- Ammonium bicarbonate
- Sodium carbonate
- Vanilla
- Tamarind
- Sesame
- Dried apricots
- Edible olive oil
- Cocoa butter substitute—basic ingredient in making sweets and cookies
- Beer
- Almonds
- Raw and processed coconut
- Pistachios
- Canned cocoa
- Canned coffee
- Butter
- Biscuits
- Macaroni and vermicelli
- Grease—as a substance used in the manufacture of boats and launches
- Fresh and canned vegetables

2. Machines, Equipment, and Automobiles

- Sedan cars equipped for the handicapped

3. Construction Materials

- Wheels for furniture
- Dyes—ready-made dyes of all types, with the exception of those organic and synthetic dyes used to fix colors and shoe dye
- Wallpaper
- False ceilings
- Shower curtains
- Wall partitions—ready-made partitions of wood, metal, or other materials
- Glass bricks
- Counters
- Medicine chests

4. Household items

- Children's toys
- Head coverings—sidaras [Iraqi peaked caps], berets, fezzes, hats, helmets, visored caps, and other head coverings, with the exception of veils and ghutras [men's headcloths]

- Children's wagons and walkers
- Tableware (saltshakers, vinegar and oil holders, toothpick holders and other [containers], with the exception of glass and ceramic vessels, forks, spoons, and knives)
- Men's and women's shoes, size 17 cm and bigger
- Iron casts
- Rugs, fiber mats, and carpets (rugs and carpets may be traded after 10 December 1992, but importation will remain banned). This includes floor carpets and rugs, as well as those not for use as floor coverings, as long as they conform to the specifications for floor carpets and rugs, be they carpets, woven or rolled mats or ready made from silk or silk remnants, wool, fine hair, or other materials. This includes kilims, Karamani carpets, and similar ready-made products.
- Incense
- Metal and plated household implements, including metal and plated kitchen implements, including silver- and gold-plated implements
- Exercise bicycles—all types
- Scrub brushes—all types and varieties
- Household implements made of plastic—goods made of pressed plastic
- Nail clippers
- Christmas trees and ornaments
- Henna
- Ready-made facial tissues only
- Hand presses for wiping tile—all types
- Shampoo, with the exception of anti-lice and anti-rash shampoo

5. Office Supplies

- Desktop and pocket calculators
- Cellophane tape
- Stationery sets—sets containing a ballpoint pen, fountain pen, and mechanical pencil with other stationery supplies in one case
- Students' pen holders—leather, plastic, or other cases for holding pens, erasers, and pencil sharpeners
- Architectural models—miniature models used by engineering consulting offices and engineering college students, such as three-dimensional models of doors, windows, etc.
- Office sets
- Arabic books (Arabic books may be traded after 10 December 1992, but the ban on importation will stand)

6.Medical and Pharmaceutical Supplies

- Breast-feeding kits
- Ear-cleaning swabs
- Infant scales

7. Tourism Supplies

- Placemats for tourism projects
- Cooking utensils
- Reserve utensils
- Machinery and infrastructure for amusement parks

8. Chemicals

- All local supplies obtained through research centers, where the Ministry of Commerce is informed of that in case of its production for those ncessary for the local market.

9. Agricultural Equipment and Supplies

- Lawnmowers

10. Clocks, Photography, and Lenses

- All clocks
- Sunglasses
- Slide projectors
- Film projectors

11. Fabric and Clothing

- Ready-to-wear men's and women's clothes—all types (as set out on p 2)
- Natural silk fabrics and waterproof fabrics

12. Electrical appliances

- Stoves and washing machines, except for home ranges
- Personal computers
- Electrical appliances
- Electric beehives
- Industrial and home meat-grinding machines
- Industrial and home electric ovens
- Electrical presses and mixers
- Air conditioners—self-contained air-conditioning units—motorized, with a fan and heat and humidity dials ("air conditioners"), including central air conditioners and ground-, wall-, and ceiling-mounted air conditioning units
- Homemakers' mixers and presses
- Kitchen heating elements
- Radio-cassette players and automobile cassette players
- Television sets
- Refrigerators and freezers
- Light fixtures
- Projectors
- Freestanding lamps
- Loudspeakers
- Heaters
- Chandeliers and brackets
- Water heaters
- Dishwashers
- Clothes dryers
- Answering machines
- Water coolers

13. Furniture

- All ready-made furniture
- All presentation and display materials (decorations, stands, mannequins, etc.

14. Industrial goods (according to the organization and aid program)

- Foodstuff preparations of cereal flours and starch not mentioned—basic ingredients for preservatives, custard, jelly, and others
- Imported cocoa powder, a basic ingredient used in the manufacture of sweets and cookies
- Butter and cocoa butter basic ingredients used in the manufacture of sweets and cookies
- Worked building stones and marble slab and mosaic tile cutters
- Other chemical products not mentioned—all chemical substances not mentioned under industrial production needs
- Dishwashing scouring pads and polishers
- Wooden utensils for home use, such as spoons, forks, and receptacles
- Greaseproof wrapping paper for sweets
- Fabrics and waterproof materials not mentioned
- Tarpaulin ground covers
- Paper containers, parcels, and file folders—bags for holding dates and pastry
- Spools, spindles, and other paper products—spools of thread without paper
- Picture frames and mats, graph paper, album frames, and ice-cream cones
- Signs of ordinary metals, and metal signs with commercial names for products
- Dolls and athletic whistles, [and] basic materials for the manufacture of children's toys
- Publications not previously banned—technical books and factory layouts (catalogues)
- Illustrated and other books and publications
- Plastic-coated picture postcards
- Sponges

Third: List of goods banned on 27 August 1991

- Carbonated drinks, including locally produced drinks, banned from supply and circulation after Dec. 10, 1992
- Nestle products, sweets, and all varieties of pastries
- Perfumes, beauty supplies, and shampoo
- Costume jewelry
- Musical instruments
- Belts and luggage
- Bedspreads
- Video players
- Ice-cream making machines
- Tapioca
- Hairpieces
- Picture frames
- Water thermoses
- Cigarette lighters
- Flints
- Personal cameras
- Movie cameras
- Flash bulbs
- Photo albums
- Shawls and ribbons
- Used tires and auto luxuries
- Figurines, flowerpots, statues, and glass, crystal, metal, or plastic decorations
- Small children's blocks
- Chess sets
- Sugar for drinks
- Olives
- Dried fruits
- Fresh fruits, including bananas and apples

Auto Accessories Banned from Exportation and Circulation

- Items inside cars including the following: steering wheel covers, seat covers, and dashboard covers
- Luxury lights
- Stickers for car windows, shades, and colored, decorative stickers.
- All varieties of curtains for use inside cars
- Compasses and extra thermometers used on car dashboards for decorative purposes
- All types of figurines that are set inside or outside cars
- All types of car keychains
- Luggage racks for car trunks
- Added reflectors of all types that are put inside or outside cars
- Additional luxury emblems
- Car ornaments—all types
- Decorative handles for door armrests
- Paper or metal door outer door lock stickers
- Extra radio or cassette player speakers—all types
- All types of extra head rests

Reaction to Christopher's Scheduling of New Talks

Peres on Resumption of Talks

TA2502175793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1705 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said that he hoped that the Palestinians would also attend the next round of peace talks in April. Peres added that Israel was nearing the time when it would have to make decisions.

Our party affairs correspondent Sheli Yehimovich spoke with Foreign Minister Peres and asked him whether he had prior knowledge of Secretary of State Warren Christopher's intention to announce the date on which the talks would be resumed.

[Begin recording] [Peres] Yes, he told me he intended to make such an announcement.

[Yehimovich] Does that mean that the Palestinians will also attend the negotiations?

[Peres] I very much hope so.

[Yehimovich] What brought them back to the negotiating table? Did Israel offer additional concessions regarding the deportees?

[Peres] I do not think so. I think that the Palestinians also have differences of opinion and are having difficulty reaching a decision. I do not believe that the possibility of changing Israel's agreement with the United States on the deportees is on the agenda. I do not think so.

[Yehimovich] Has Israel made any positive gestures in other fields? Has it for example, eased the living conditions of Palestinians in the territories, or made other concessions that convinced the Palestinians to participate in the next round of talks?

[Peres] Israel is doing this all the time without any connection to the deportee affair. Israel is interested in improving living conditions in the territories.

[Yehimovich] What do you expect to happen during the next round of talks in April and what can we achieve there?

[Peres] Look, we are nearing the time when we will have to make decisions. Almost all the problems have been mapped out, and now we have to reach decisions. That is what we shall do.

[Yehimovich] Decisions regarding Israel's withdrawal from the Golan Heights, for instance?

[Peres] I do not want to discuss hypothetical possibilities. In my opinion the issue of withdrawal on the Golan Heights is very much linked to what the Syrians offer in the nature of peace, as well as to the security arrangements. This is not a separate issue.

[Yehimovich] Thank you, Foreign Minister Peres. [end recording]

Rabin Comments on Action

TA2502184593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Report by Le'a Zinder—recorded]

[Text] [Zinder] Prime Minister Rabin, speaking to reporters at the Hilton Hotel in Tel Aviv where he attended the annual convention of insurance companies, gave no hint that he had any foreknowledge of the impending invitations that would be issued in Geneva a few hours later, but the prime minister's manner certainly expressed confidence in the resumption of the talks, as a foreign correspondent asked him: Mr. Prime Minister, where is the ball now?

[Rabin] Where is the ball? In the air. But I believe that peace-making is not a charity. It derives from interest, and I believe the Arab countries—I hope also the Palestinians—and Israel are interested to achieve peace and to solve the conflict. The only way to solve it is around the negotiating table. Do not be impatient, be cool. Everything will be settled. Thank you very much.

[Zinder] Asked about the PLO statements in Tunis charging that Israel had reneged on agreements with the United States concerning Palestinian demands, Rabin responded by attacking the PLO.

[Rabin] I do not know what or where they demand. I spoke with the secretary of state and I believe that we reached certain understanding in principles—I am not talking about any concrete positions—but, I do not have to respond to the PLO. I said time and again that certain people and the leadership of the Palestinians was one of the main obstacles on the road to peace. I am sorry that too many Israelis did not realize it, including members of my party. Because the more they courted them, the worse the situation became.

Peres on Palestinian Stand

TA2602064593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] Secretary Christopher's announcement [on resuming peace talks] was received with great satisfaction at the prime minister's bureau in Jerusalem. Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres also welcomed the announcement. Reporter Miryam Herschlag heard his initial reaction:

[Begin recording] [Peres] I am glad, and I think it is a right move in the right direction.

[Herschlag] Now, Mr. Baker waited until he had the agreement of all parties. Warren Christopher has already said he knows he does not have a promise from the Palestinians. What does this mean?

[Peres] You have to have some new experiments, don't we? But I think also that at least on one occasion Mr. Baker sent an invitation to Israel before he got from Israel the Israeli agreement.

[Herschlag] So, this puts the onus then on the Palestinians?

[Peres] Very much so.

[Herschlag] What would you say to them?

[Peres] I would say that I must come. That they will take a ladder and come back to the realities of our situation.

[Peres] Will Israel change its position on the deportees in an effort to get them to the table?

[Peres] I do not think so. I do not think there is a need for it. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0505 GMT on 26 February also carries an interview with Foreign Minister Peres, in which he says that "while the PLO attempts to create the impression that they are the address for negotiations, all they do is make declarations without reaching any decisions." When asked what is needed to bring the Palestinians back to the negotiating table, Peres says: "I think that the gap is presently more one of words than of content. I think they should take a long, hard look at reality and at the real content of things and not constantly be held captive by the statements they themselves have made or become hostage to the caprices of Hamas." Peres goes on to note: "The negotiations are currently more a matter of semantics than practicalities, and I see no reason why we should not find the right words to bridge the current gap."]

Rabin on Deportees

TA2502155893 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Report by Moti Gadish]

[Excerpts] Yitzhaq Rabin, prime minister and defense minister today said that making peace was not an act of charity. Making peace should stem from the desire of all the sides to resolve the conflict, and the visit of the U.S. secretary of state has facilitated the resumption of the peace negotiations. [passage omitted]

The prime minister said that he knew nothing about the PLO's alleged opposition to the agreements reached in Israel between Secretary of State Warren Christopher and the members of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks.

[Begin Rabin recording] I very much hope that the United States and Russia will take the initiative and bring about the resumption of the peace negotiations. It is inconceivable that 'Arafat should hold the key to the resumption of the talks. [end recording]

As for the deportee affair, the prime minister asserted that any Palestinians who expected the agreement between Israel and the United States on the deportees to be changed could simply forget about it. Moreover, the prime minister refused to promise that the deportations had been a one-time step.

[Begin Rabin recording] I find no pleasure in carrying out deportations. If the violence and terror subsides, then we will not have need for such measures. [passage omitted]

'Ending 45 Years of War' Viewed

TA2602054993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said last night that Israel could face momentous, and perhaps even historic, decisions this year. There was a possibility of ending 45 years of war. Mr. Rabin noted that this does not depend solely upon Israel but asserted that the government would do everything possible to promote that possibility.

In a speech before the Labor party convention, the prime minister expressed the belief that the peace talks would be resumed in the coming weeks. Rabin added that the meetings with Secretary of State Warren Christopher had improved the special relationship between Jerusalem and Washington, and said that the friendship between the two countries was growing stronger each day.

Palestinians Say Date 'Premature'

TA2602120993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] The heads of the Palestinian delegation are insisting that Israel declare that it will stop carrying out deportations, and say that this is their condition for future participation in the peace talks. In their opinion, Secretary of State Warren Christopher's announcement of the resumption of the talks in April was a little premature.

Meanwhile, the Palestinians are holding internal consultations in order to come up with a formula that would also be acceptable to Israel. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports:

[Begin recording] [Amir] The heads of the Palestinian delegation are leaving for Amman at the beginning of next week. From there, they will fly to Tunis to hold a series of consultations with the PLO leadership. The Palestinian delegates have been forced into an uncomfortable situation after Mr. Christopher announced the resumption of the peace talks in April, before they had the opportunity to explain their positions to the residents in the territories. Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, the head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations, said that Christopher's announcement was a little premature.

['Abd-al-Shafi, in English] It was a little premature. I mean, to do this. Maybe the foreign minister was under a wrong impression or... [pauses] I do not want to say that he is trying to force things on us, but I do not think that we have finalized all that we need to to go back to the negotiating table.

[Amir] Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi seemed to be searching for words to explain what had happened. He said that Secretary of State Christopher may have been under the wrong impression. He declined to say that Christopher may be attempting to force things on the Palestinians. In any event, 'Abd-al-Shafi added, we are still not in a position to return to the negotiating table. Palestinian leaders now claim that the ball is in Israel's court, after the United States led them to understand that Israel was refusing to declare that it would not resort to the deportation measure ever again. Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said that only such a declaration might appease the residents of the territories who are opposed to the resumption of the talks.

['Abd-al-Shafi, in English] Well, the mood of the people certainly is a mood of anger and of despair of the peace process. On our part, we are heedful on this mood, and certainly we do not to see ourselves in contradiction with our constituencies.

[Amir] There is a sense of anger and despair about the peace process in the territories, Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said. We are aware of that and do not wish to act against the wishes of our constituents. Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi stressed that he and his colleagues were trying to explain logically to the residents that it was in their own interest to participate in the negotiations. It goes without saying, he said, that an Israeli declaration on an end to deportations would facilitate this. [end recording]

Israeli Arabs Polled on Peace Negotiations

TA2502195893 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Results of an opinion poll in Israel's Arab sector conducted by the Yafo Research Center of Nazareth indicate that 49 percent of Arab citizens support the resumption of talks between the Palestinian and Israeli delegations prior to solving the deportee issue. On the other hand, 71.5 percent believe that the Israeli Government is serious in negotiating with the Palestinians, but less than half expect the talks to result in a solution to the Palestinian problem.

On the credibility of the National Committee of Arab Local Councils, 5.7 percent replied that it is this committee which expresses the interests of Arab citizens, while 18.6 percent replied that the party which expresses the interests of Arab citizens is the Israeli Government. Some 18.2 percent affirmed that the Arab Knesset members are the ones who express the interests of Arab citizens.

Our correspondent Salman Tawil reports that the poll was conducted between 16 and 25 February and included 773 male and female residents from the Israeli Arab sector over the age of 16, representing various classes and groups in the country.

Commentary on Need for U.S. 'Enforcement, Coercion'

TA2502135493 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 25 Feb 93 p 9

[Commentary by Yisra'el Zamir: "The Time for Direct Negotiations Is Over"]

[Excerpts] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit has infused great spirit into the peace process. The antiprogress camp will call it an evil spirit, others will welcome it. It any event, President Clinton and Secretary of State Christopher have repeatedly emphasized that they are a "full partner," meaning that America realizes that the talks will wither without it. There will always be another pretext, such as the deportee affair, the situation in Gaza, or the gunfire in Khan Yunus to hamper the talks. This time the United States is not entering the peace process as "an honest broker" operating like an American gentleman, but rather as a partner in the Israeli-Arab negotiations.

The U.S. establishment has reached the correct conclusion that despite the direct talks between Israel and the Arab states, none of the parties has sufficient power to lead a move all the way to a favorable conclusion. The Palestinians are afraid that if they compromise and make any concession whatsoever to Israel, their very lives will be threatened by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the like. Rabin, too, is in trouble. With protesters trucking snow down from the Golan to the demonstration square opposite the Prime Minister's Office, he knows that the Golan Heights inhabitants will leave no stone unturned in their efforts to foil any solution involving evacuation or demilitarization. And if talks are held on autonomy and the possibility of Judaea and Samaria settlements coming in some way under Palestinian or Jordanian rule, there will be bloodshed. Once 100,000 Judaea and Samaria settlers join the Golan inhabitants, it is to be doubted that the Rabin-headed government's determination will be strong enough to check the aftermath of the shock and to force agreements. A few "Labor defectors" will no doubt vote against the government. The Sinai evacuation cannot be compared with the territorial arrangements involved in the evacuation of areas in the Golan and in Judaea and Samaria.

None of this means that the government should give up. In my opinion, it should attain the best possible arrangements with Syria and the Palestinians, in order to eliminate the peril of war once and for all and to enable this region to finally start breathing air devoid of threats and the risk of war.

To make these compromises achievable, however, an "honest broker" like Baker or Shultz will hardly suffice. We need an "active partner" who will be able to bend a few arms, both in the Arab and the Israeli camp. [passage omitted]

The Palestinians are the weak link in every arrangement, and that is where the main difficulty lies. Yitzhaq Rabin would be capable of reaching arrangements and agreements with President al-Asad similar to those with President al-Sadat, but he would not achieve the same with the Palestinians. In their case, he asserts, there is no one to talk to. Their delegation to Washington is not acceptable to the entire Palestinian public.

The Palestinians seem to need an iron fist—in the political, not the military sense. If America enters the depth of the negotiations as an involved party, there will be a chance of uniting all the Palestinians around 'Arafat or some other leader. If America declares that 'Arafat is the man with whom negotiations are to be held, Israel will swallow the pill and negotiate with him. Without American involvement featuring coercion as a by-element, it is doubtful that Israel will be able to achieve it on its own—even if the government's Knesset majority will allow it to reach full agreements.

Therefore, Washington is right to declare that direct Israeli-Arab negotiations stand slim chances. The roads of the West Bank and Gaza are strewn with so many stumbling blocks that Israel alone will be unable to sweep them aside. This is a situation that calls for a bulldozer acceptable to both sides, and both sides will have to realize that the removal of the blocks will cause much pain. Menahem Begin inflicted the "Sinai trauma" on several thousands families. If Rabin, assisted by America, manages to achieve arrangements, he will cause many traumas on the one hand and a great deal of joy on the other. It is up to each person to decide which he prefers.

If the Clinton administration is determined to be "an active partner," "a full partner" in the negotiations—there will be hope. To persuade the obstinate sectors in Israel, there is a need today for American determination, together with threats of enforcement, coercion, and perhaps even threats of economic sanctions. Is Clinton prepared for that? Does he have the power "to convince" all the parties? It is hard to tell. The United States has been a sole international superpower since the collapse of the Soviet Union. No more manipulating between the two big ones. Israel and its neighbors have to digest this and realize that the rules of the game have changed.

Several presidents have resided in Washington since Carter led the peace process with Egypt. Our great hopes from them were shattered. Let us hope the Clinton-Christopher administration will be successful.

Rabin Addresses Labor Party Conference on Peace

TA2502202793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1830 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Address by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin at the Labor Party conference at Binyeney Ha'uma, in Jerusalem, marking the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Labor Movement—live]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Party members: We have basically changed and overturned Israel's political policy. When we established the government, we announced that we do not aspire for a greater Israel. We are willing to return territories for peace and security, but not all of the territories. This is no small matter. Historians will determine in the future that on 23 June 1992, the state of Israel decided to become a Jewish state that has no need for nor business in having control over 1.8 million people who do not want its control, who plot and hold ill-will against it.

We will dedicate the coming months to intense efforts for peace. We will do everything we have to succeed. We believe that the peace talks with Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and the Palestinians will resume in the coming weeks. We have reason to hope that some of our Arab partners also want to end wars and that they intend to talk peace.

In terms of Israel's relations with the world, we have always known, and we learned again last week in Jerusalem, just how important friends are. Most important to us is the friendship of the only large superpower. Our talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher helped bring the special relations between Jerusalem and Washington closer. We feel that our friendship with the new U.S. Administration is tightening with every passing day.

The peace talks do not mean a readiness to accept every compromise at all cost. The desire for peace does not make us blind, and we can still see straight the reality around us. Not everyone has accepted our existence here. As long as there are those in the Khomeynist Arab world who want our physical elimination, it is the duty of every Israeli Government to be extra careful on issues of national and personal security. We are saying, and you should say this to your families and friends: Any legal means at our disposal will be taken to harm those who wish to harm us. We are ready to make compromises for peace, but there is no willingness for any compromise in the struggle against terrorism and our enemies. Let there be no mistake: In the choice between peace and security—if the two are mutually exclusive—security comes first.

Movement members, through the years, we have always focused our interest on issues of foreign and defense policy. We have always cared a great deal about what is said about us in Katmandu or what they think about us in Abidjan; about what is being claimed against us in the State Department; about what the Quai d'Orsay has

against us. This is very important today, as well. We must be very careful not to underestimate the importance of the world's friendship, God forbid. We cherish and appreciate every hand extended toward us and every friend who opens his gates for us. We are pleased to note that in the past several years the world is no longer all against us and we are no longer a nation under siege. We are appreciated and sympathized with, and no CNN broadcast, no matter how hard it tries—and it is trying hard—can spoil this for us. At the same time, however, while we cultivate our friendship with the world, it is our duty as a government to look at what takes place here at home. We will be tested for our deeds and failures not thousands of miles away from here, but right here at home, several hundred meters from here. [passage omitted]

Hurd 'More Optimistic' About Peace Prospects

TA2602072493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd says he is now more optimistic about the prospects for the Middle East peace process. He was interviewed by our London correspondent Jerry Lewis as he emerged from talks with President Hayim Herzog late yesterday.

[Begin recording] [Lewis] British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd told Israel radio he is to travel to Brussels today to be briefed by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher on the latest moves aimed at putting the Middle East peace process back on the rails. As he left President Herzog's hotel suite following their 40-minute meeting yesterday, I asked him whether he was now more optimistic that the Washington talks would resume shortly.

[Hurd] Yes, I think I am. I am going to Brussels tomorrow and Warren Christopher will be telling some of us how he now sees the situation, but I think clearly he has been able to make some progress during his visit.

[Lewis] Mr. Hurd added that his discussions with the Israeli president had been conducted in a very friendly atmosphere, and he had gained the strong impression that President Herzog was enjoying his visit.

[Hurd] We are delighted to have him here. I asked him some questions and he gave some very clear answers about how things are going at home and how he sees the future of the peace process.

[Lewis] Finally, I asked whether the issue of the Palestinian deportees figured on their agenda.

[Hurd] Not in any depth. The president knows the views we have. We believe that more needs to be done. A significant step has been taken but more needs to be done and I believe it will be done.

[Lewis] Today, President Herzog concludes his four-day official visit, seeing some newspaper and electronic media editors and correspondents, before going to 10 Downing Street for his meeting and lunch with John Major. [end recording]

Arabs Claim IDF Injured 8 in Khan Yunus

TA2502143693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] The Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam squad has announced that it assumes responsibility for the incident in which shots were fired at a police car in Gaza this morning. No one was hurt by the shooting. The policemen returned fire and the terrorists fled.

Searching for fugitives earlier, the security forces imposed a curfew on the al-Fara' neighborhood in Khan Yunus. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that residents of seven houses were ordered to leave them in order to have them searched, and Khan Yunus residents said that the soldiers fired at the houses and caused damage. The fugitives were not found in the searches of the houses. Five men of the al-Fara' family were detained for questioning. Local residents rioted when the operation was over. They were dispersed by Army fire and eight of them were wounded, according to the Khan Yunus residents. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman said that the matter is being examined.

The City of Rafah is under curfew for the second day, because three days ago local residents staged riots in which one man was killed by soldiers' gunfire.

'Collaborator' Killed in Jabalyah 26 Feb

TA2602112793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] In the Gaza Strip the body of a Jabalyah resident was found this morning. Residents of the refugee camp said three men kidnapped and later murdered him. It appears that the murderers suspected the victim of collaborating with Israeli authorities.

In another development, an Israeli Army patrol was stoned in Khan Yunus. According to the local residents, soldiers opened fire, wounding four residents.

And in Rafah the curfew continues for the fourth day following disturbances there.

Council Shelves Sharon Plan for Neighborhood

TA2502161593 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 25 Feb 93 p A7

[Report by Nadav Shragay]

[Excerpt] The National Planning and Building Council's appeal subcommittees on 23 February approved the construction plan for the Ma'muniyyah school in East

Jerusalem's al-Shaykh Jarrah neighborhood, and ruled that a special school for approximately 200 handicapped children could be built.

The decision further stipulated that any change or use of the structure for other purposes would require the endorsement of the committee for Jerusalem's security, or the approval of any other body authorized by the government.

This has temporarily buried former construction and housing minister Ari'el Sharon's plans to build a Jewish neighborhood of 200 housing units on the site. Even after the Labor government assumed power, Sharon's plan had continued to be supported by the Interior Ministry and by Eli Suissa, the chairman of the Jerusalem regional committee for planning and building.

According to the previous government's planning, the Jewish neighborhood was designated to stretch until the site allocated for the Ma'muniyyah school in al-Shaykh Jarrah, as well as on the area known as the Mufti's Vineyard. Since the new government assumed power, the Jerusalem Municipality has managed to torpedo another three large plans by Sharon to set up Jewish neighborhoods in East Jerusalem: in Ra's al-'Amud, Herod's Gate, and the City of David. [passage omitted]

New Team To Prepare for Autonomy Police Force

TA2302111593 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 23 Feb 93 p 1

[Report by Tova Tzimuqi]

[Text] Police Minister Moshe Shahal has set up a team of jurists to work out a detailed legal and operational plan prior to the establishment of the autonomy and the establishment of a local police force in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Shahal instructed the team to act according to the guidelines of the Camp David accords, which call for the autonomy to include a "strong" police force.

The police force will be a clear expression of Palestinian self- rule in the territories. It will be responsible for maintaining law and order under the autonomy agreement, while cooperating and dividing up responsibilities with the Israel Police.

The team of jurists set up by Shahal is also studying foreign examples on the subject through cooperation with various police and security forces. For instance, it is considering the method the British and French used during their rule of the Hebrides: The local police force operated in teams made up of British and French policemen.

Agricultural Agreement With Russia Signed

TA2502125093 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 25 Feb 93 p 5

[Report by Yosef Galili]

[Text] A Russian-Israeli agricultural cooperation agreement was signed in a meeting yesterday between Russian Agriculture and Foodstuffs Minister Viktor Khlystun and his Israeli counterpart, Ya'aqov Tzur.

During his upcoming official visit to Moscow, Prime Minister Rabin will sign four agreements in the spheres of agriculture, energy, science, and culture, which were initialed in Tel Aviv .

In his remarks, Agriculture Minister Ya'aqov Tzur stressed that despite its small size and financial constraints, Israel will put all its know-how, technology, and experts at the disposal of Russian agriculture. According to him, Israeli science and technology will also be part of the cooperation with the Russian agriculture authorities.

The five-year agreement will be automatically renewed, unless one of the sides wishes to change or annul it.

Herzog Leaves for 1st State Visit to Britain

TA2302074593 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0730 GMT 23 Feb 93

[Text] President Hayim Herzog left for London this morning aboard an El Al flight on his first and last official visit to the British capital, where he will be the guest of Queen Elizabeth II. The president drove straight to the aircraft and did not make any statement, but a spokesman for the president's residence said that the president's busy schedule would include meetings with British Prime Minister John Major and members of Parliament, as well as participation in a number of events organized by the Jewish community and large Jewish organizations.

From Britain, the president goes on to the Netherlands for a state visit as the guest of Queen Beatrix. He will be the only foreign head of state to participate in the events marking the liberation of the Netherlands during World War II.

Atomic Energy Commission Reacts to Commentary

TA2302123993 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 23 Feb 93 p A1

[Excerpts] The Atomic Energy Commission, which belongs to the Prime Minister's Office, has stated that nuclear waste is stored at "the Negev Nuclear Research Center" in the vicinity of Dimona.

This statement was included in a letter sent to HA'ARETZ in reaction to Dani Rabinovich's report

from 18 February which expressed concern with the way nuclear waste was being handled and where it was buried.

The reference is to highly radioactive nuclear waste, which is produced by the reactors at the nuclear research centers in Dimona and Nahal Soreq, and to nuclear waste of a lesser degree of radioactivity, produced in approximately 300 institutes dealing with medical and other research throughout the country.

Until today, the public has been supplied with very little information about the way the authorities dispose of nuclear waste. [passage omitted]

The letter by the Atomic Energy Commission's spokesman rules out the possibility that nuclear waste is shipped abroad by Israel. Nevertheless, the letter, which mentions only one authorized storage site for nuclear waste in Israel, implies that nuclear waste is transported along Israeli roads from the Nahal Soreq installation on the coastal plain to the Nuclear Research Center in the Negev.

Fifth Arrow Test Re-Scheduled 26 Feb

TA2602070893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] The fifth test of Israel's Arrow antimissile missile is now due to take place this morning. Military sources said the launch in the Mediterranean was first scheduled for Wednesday this week but was delayed for technical reasons.

Israel Aircraft Industries says the current test is aimed at verifying the guidance system which caused problems in the four previous launches.

Buwayz Expects New Efforts To Spur Negotiations

NC2602100793 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has affirmed that the United States will seek to improve the implementation terms of Resolution 799 from the standpoint of the time framework. He affirmed that the U.S. Administration is committed to the basis and mechanism of the peace conference, and that this will lead to advancing the negotiations process within a very short time.

In an interview with the Middle East Television, MBC, Minister Buwayz added that the talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher dealt with many issues. The United States affirmed its commitment to Lebanon's sovereignty and independence and to efforts to implement Resolution 425.

Minister Buwayz maintained that Lebanon's boycott of the multilateral negotiations is not absolute, because the boycott does not pertain to the basis of the negotiations, but to their timing. He affirmed that the multilateral negotiations are a process designed to complement peace and that the time has not come for entering into these negotiations.

Minister Buwayz expected fresh momentum in the peace process because of energetic new efforts that will be employed to end the inactivity or deadlock which has characterized these negotiations in the past few months.

Deportees Seek 'Urgent' UNSC Meeting

NC2602134793 Paris AFP in English 1248 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] Marj al-Zuhur, Lebanon, Feb 26 (AFP)—The spokesman of Palestinian deportees on Friday [26 February] called for an urgent UN Security Council meeting to order their immediate return saying peace talks could not resume in April.

'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, a leader of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, also described the just concluded peace mission by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher as a "failure."

"After this failure we call on the Security Council to meet immediately to implement Resolution 799 and enforce the protection our people in the occupied territories," al-Rantisi said in the deportees' no man's land in south Lebanon.

Resolution 799 orders the immediate return of some 400 Palestinians who were deported by Israel to Lebanon on December 17 in a move that stalled Arab-Israeli peace talks. Christopher on Thursday announced that invitations would be sent to Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and a Palestinian delegation from the occupied territories to return to the negotiating table in April.

But al-Rantisi was not optimistic on an early resumption of the talks.

"I don't think that the negotiations will resume in April without a settlement of the deportee crisis," he said, adding that a solution was "an essential Arab condition" for returning to the negotiations.

"We cannot understand how Israel can resume negotiations when it makes use of terrorism in the occupied territories," al-Rantisi added. He said that the Palestinian peace negotiators "cannot ignore the will of the Palestinian people who refuse the negotiations."

Al-Rantisi did not expect Russia, which is to invite the Palestinian team for talks in Moscow according to Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, to be able to "influence the Palestinians."

Al-Hariri Briefs Former Premier on Christopher Tour

NC2502111793 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1000 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri today met in his office with former Prime Minister Dr. Salim al-Huss and discussed the recent developments. After the meeting, Dr. al-Huss said: I was briefed by his excellency the prime minister on the results of his recent Arab tour and the results of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's trip, particularly his visit to Lebanon. Al-Huss said: On the basis of what I heard, I can say that the results of his Arab tour were practically positive.

Regarding Christopher's visit to Lebanon, al-Huss said: There is no doubt that what was said about it is true. In the statements he made at the conclusion of his visit Christopher did not mention UN Resolutions 425 and 799, which directly concern Lebanon, but spoke about general issues pertaining to the region. He added: We are part of this region and are involved in a peace process that affects the entire region. But we also are interested in those two specific resolutions. Resolution 425 is crucial to the entire problem in Lebanon. It is peculiar that the U.S. secretary of state did not refer to this resolution, but I understood from Prime Minister al-Hariri that the issue of Resolution 425 figured prominently in the talks and that the Lebanese side outlined its position as necessary.

Al-Hirawi Addresses Ramadan Banquet 25 Feb

NC2502194893 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1702 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Speech by Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi at Dar al-Ifta' in Beirut during a banquet to break the Ramadan fast—live]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Dear brothers: Reconstruction, reorganization of the state, and economic recovery will not divert our attention or dissuade us from seeking to liberate our occupied land in southern Lebanon and

western al-Biqa' through the implementation of Security Council Resolution 425. We have declared this in all our meetings and contacts. We emphasized the importance of implementing Resolution 425 in the talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Chistopher a few days ago. This is our basic goal and the goal of our negotiating team, which is working according to your government's instructions to bring about the implementation of this resolution. Casting doubt on this constant harms the sacred duty to which we have all committed ourselves.

Let it be clear that the arbitrary Israeli acts of aggression against Lebanon will not change our stand one iota. We rejected the deportation of the Palestinians to our land because we are concerned about our homeland and about the Palestinian people's legitimate rights. We will not cede our rights or bargain over our dignity and independence. Lebanese territory is for the Lebanese and Lebanon's decisions are made by its sons. Lebanon is, however, committed to solidarity with its brothers, primarily Syria, led by President Hafiz al-Asad, to establish legitimate rights and a just, comprehensive, and permanent peace in the region.

Dear brothers, now that wars have baptized us with tragedies and bitterness, we know better the value of peace and realize more clearly that we must not sacrfice our prosperity in vain. We are all required to take a stand and play our role in the process of reconstruction, liberation, and peace. This homeland is ours and our fate is the same no matter what sect or area we belong to. We have saved our country from disorder and defeat and now we must regenerate it through development and reconstruction, and we will do so, God almighty. May God's peace be upon you. [applause]

Al-Hariri Says Israel Must Observe Resolution 425

NC2602133093 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has said that his government is working to fulfill its promises. He said reconstruction of the airport and electricity and telephone networks will begin in spring. In the fall, he added, reconstruction of Beirut's commercial center will start.

In a statement published in a Gulf newspaper, al-Hariri said: We are determined to build a strong state capable of extending its authority all over Lebanon, establishing institutions, purging the administration, and providing all the necessary services to every region and to all Lebanese.

Al-Hariri stressed the need for Israel to implement Security Council Resolution 425. He said the deportees issue concerns Israel and emphasized that Lebanon will never allow anyone into the country without an entry visa.

Faithful Resistance Attacks in Sujud

NC2602132693 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 28 Feb 93

[Text] AFP reported a short while ago that a position jointly manned by the Israeli Army and South Lebanese Army [SLA] was attacked this morning by the Faithful Resistance organization. The agency quoted security sources in the border zone as saying that the Sujud position on the eastern border of the zone came under attack this morning by large-caliber weapons. Although the sources were unable to say whether the attack caused casualties, the Faithful Resistance has claimed responsibility for the operation and affirmed that it inflicted casualties among the position's personnel. The organization added that an M-113 personnel carrier had been destroyed and its six crew members killed or wounded as a result.

Israeli 'Warplanes' Attack Iqlim al-Tuffah Village

NC2602141893 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] Two Israeli warplanes raided the village of Jarju' in Iqlim al-Tuffah this afternoon. The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent says the house of citizen Ni'matallah Sim'an was damaged. The raid was accompanied by violent artillery shelling of the villages of Jarju', 'Arab Salim, Mlikh, al-Luwayzah, and Mlita from the Israeli occupation forces' positions in al-Zaffatah and al- Suwayda'.

Al-Shar' Meets With Christopher in Brussels

JN2602123893 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] Brussels—Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' met with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Brussels today. Edward Djerejian, U.S. assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs, attended the meeting.

Christopher briefed al-Shar' on the results of the last leg of his tour of the region concerning the issue of Palestinian expellees and the resumption of the peace process. The two sides agreed to resume contacts in this regard.

Al-Shar' on 'Eagerness' To Resume Peace Talks

JN2502210693 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1650 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Damascus, 25 Feb (SANA)—Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has emphasized Syria's eagerness to resume the Middle East peace talks in an appropriate and comfortable atmosphere, as well as its adherence to a unified Arab stand. He said: Such an atmosphere cannot be available unless the deportees return to their homes and families.

In a statement to the newspaper AL-HAYAH published today, the foreign minister added: We in Syria adhere to a comprehensive and just solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and to the full implementation of UN resolutions. Replying to a question, al-Shar' said: As is known, Israel was obliged to go to the Madrid conference , whereas we went there with complete political will to regain our rights and implement Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

Asked about the meetings of the Syrian, Turkish, and Iranian foreign ministers which discussed Iraq's territorial integrity, al-Shar' said that the main objective of these meetings was, and still is, to coordinate the efforts of these neighbors of Iraq to safeguard Iraq's territorial integrity. He added: We believe that these meetings have considerably cautioned against the partitioning of Iraq. We in Syria received letters from a number of Iraqi opposition parties asserting that they support Iraq's unity. This, in itself, is a positive matter and one of the important results of the trilateral meetings, he said.

Regarding Syrian-French relations, the foreign minister said that during his meeting with French President Francois Mitterrand the latter clearly emphasized his interest in these relations. The French president also appreciated Syria's role and said he is eager to meet with President Hafiz al-Asad. France can play a useful role in the peace process and in implementing Security Council resolutions, particularly Resolutions 242 and 338, al-Shar' added.

Radio on Christopher Tour, Deportee Issue

JN2502180593 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1235 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Station Commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher today left the region full, as he said, of hopes that the peace talks will resume. He noted that the deportee issue is still an obstacle that should be removed. While all the Arab parties undoubtedly join Mr. Christopher in his hopes that the peace talks will resume, the Arab side certainly sees some positive signs in Mr. Christopher's admission that the deportee issue is still an obstacle that should be removed. This is so because since the announcement of the U.S.-Israeli deal on the deportees, Israel has done its best to circulate the idea that this issue is almost resolved and that it was never on Christopher's agenda during his regional tour.

Anyone who followed the U.S. secretary's talks during this tour, which ended today, will note that the deportee issue has strongly imposed itself on all the talks which Christopher held, and has deservedly occupied an important position in these talks as a political and humanitarian issue that cannot be concealed or circumvented. On all the legs of Christopher's tour, various proposals were discussed to resolve this issue. This, in its entirety, confirms that the U.S.-Israeli deal on the deportee issue was, as the Arabs said from the very beginning, far from providing an appropriate solution to this issue. It is certainly positive that the U.S. official showed a favorable response to the Arab [words indistinct] on the ways to end this issue. At the same time, it is natural for Israel to be disappointed at finding out that this issue, contrary to Israel's claim, is not almost resolved.

Christopher's statement that the deportee issue is an obstacle constitutes an admission, although implicit, that the Arab stand is sound. This stand says that the resumption of the peace process cannot be separated from the resolution of the deportee issue. This link stems from the fact that the bases to resolve these two issues—taking into account the comprehensive nature of the first and the special nature of the second—are the resolutions of international legitimacy. Israel, for example, cannot deal selectively with this or that resolution. Hence, Israel cannot reject Resolution 799 and seek to circumvent it while claiming that it accepts Resolutions 242 and 338 on which the peace process is based. Here, selectivity cannot be accepted because it reflects double standards, which will abolish credibility. Accordingly, Israel's abidance of Resolution 799 is still the real way to the implementation of other resolutions passed by the international legitimacy, led by Resolutions 242 and 338 which are pertinent to the peace process. In fact, this link attaches great importance to both Resolution 799 on the deportees and the need to fully implement it so an

appropriate atmosphere can be created and all the parties concerned with the peace process can return to the negotiating table.

U.S. Urged To Remove 'All Israeli Obstacles'

JN2502214793 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 25 Feb 93

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "How Can We Overcome Obstacles?" AL- THAWRAH says: It is unreasonable to talk about advancing the peace process without Washington's guaranteeing the removal of all Israeli obstacles. If Washington does this, it will pave the road for just and comprehensive peace.

AL-THAWRAH states that this requires acting swiftly to end Israel's suppression, deportation, and demolition, so that Israel will not use time to achieve the gains declared by Shamir when he pointed out that he had planned to prolong the negotiations for 10 years during which he would expel Arabs, bring in Jewish settlers, and Judaize the land after planting it with settlements.

AL-THAWRAH explains that if the Rabin government continues to expel Arabs, demolish their homes, uproot their trees, take away their water and food, kill and arrest them, and Judaize their territory, then over what will the Arabs negotiate?

Concluding its article, AL-THAWRAH says: Here emerges the mission of the new U.S. Administration to keep its pledges, since advancing the peace process requires removing all Israeli obstacles. Will it do so?

Papers View Outcome of Christopher Tour

JN2602104393 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Press review]

[Text] Our papers' commentaries and political analyses today revolve around the need for Israel to implement the UN resolutions, emphasizing that otherwise, a just and comprehensive peace will not be achieved in the region.

In its editorial today, AL-BA'TH discusses the U.S. secretary of state's announcement of an initial date in April for the resumption of regional peace talks. The paper wonders: Will the peace process resume on that date?

The paper says: The signs that coincided with the U.S. secretary's visit to the region, as well as those that will emerge in the future, indicate that Israel will continue with its policy of intransigence and procrastination within the framework of its evasion of the requirements of the peace process, which seeks to achieve peace in the region.

The paper adds: It was clear, even before Christopher's tour, that Israel is trying to jump to conclusions by playing several cards and waffling between an intransigent position at times, and a flexible one at others. It has strongly played the deportee card in an attempt—or so it thought—to divide Arab ranks and undermine the principles from which the Arab parties proceed in the direction of a unified position on the peace process. In a clear move to influence the U.S. secretary's ideas, Israel played the Golan card through the security theory, a theory proven wrong by the technology of modern weapons, to adhere even further to the occupation of a territory, which was, is still, and will remain Syrian.

AL-BA'TH concludes its editorial by saying: It is not important to only set a date or to resume the talks. Their importance not withstanding, this is not the end. What is more important is for the new phase of these talks to follow the principles upon which the peace process was based, notably Israel's commitment to the implementation of UN resolutions, particularly Resolutions 338, 425, and 799.

On the same subject, AL-THAWRAH says in a commentary: U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has ended his first Middle Eastern tour with statements noting that there are some obstacles on the path of regional peace which must be resolved. The paper explains that the entire world already knows the source of these obstacles, at what they are aimed, and the party responsible for them. Israel, with its intransigent policies and positions that reject the requirements and principles of peace, is still the party that obstructs the peace process and its chances and possible ability to end the stalemate, in which it found itself because of that policy.

AL-THAWRAH adds: This fact was confirmed to the former U.S. Administration. It has equally been confirmed to the new U.S. Administration by way of the first tour by its secretary of state, Mr. Warren Christopher.

AL-THAWRAH says: During Christopher's tour, Israel did not stop practicing the same policy. At the tour's outset, Israel escalated its attacks against Lebanon and intensified its repressive policy against the Palestinian people. Plus, on the eve of the U.S. secretary's visit to occupied Palestine, it announced plans to build a new settlement on the Golan Heights. Furthermore, it continues to refuse to implement Resolution 799 on the deportee issue, which also falls within the context of a policy that is obstructive to the peace process.

AL-THAWRAH adds: The U.S. secretary detected from the Arab side a genuine interest in peace and the need to boost its process. He also noticed a warm welcome of the Clinton administration's affirmation that it is committed to the principles of the peace process and is determined to boost that process by playing the role of a full partner.

The paper says: In light of this contradiction between the absolutely positive Arab position and the absolutely negative Israeli position, it becomes clear what the U.S.

Administration has to do at this phase to give a required boost to the peace process, and to bring the U.S. role in harmony with the commitment the U.S. Administration has made toward the peace process.

In another commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: While affirming our concern for peace and sincere and genuine desire to achieve it, unlike Israel which has employed all means to torpedo and obstruct it, we also reaffirm that peace cannot and will not be achieved with continued aggression, settlement activities, and terrorism.

The paper says: We in Syria do not relinquish a grain of soil or a national or pan-Arab right. Nor do we accept anything short of implementing UN resolutions in full and without selectivity, including Resolution 799. This alone is the sound and correct path for establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

Prime Minister Receives Ukrainian Minister

JN2502154593 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi received at 1300 today Ukrainian Irrigation Minister Viktor Maximovych Koryev [title and name as heard].

The meeting was attended by Minister of Irrigation Engineer 'Abd-al-Rahman Madani.

Talks at the meeting dealt with bilateral relations and ways to develop them in all fields to benefit the two friendly peoples and countries.

Khaddam Confers With DPRK Parliamentary Delegation

JN2502144093 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received at 1030 today Yang Hyong-sop, chairman of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly and his delegation.

The meeting was attended by Shakir 'Isayyid, head of the People's Assembly's Arab and Foreign Affairs Committee, and the DPRK ambassador in Damascus.

Talks at the meeting dealt with the current international situation and bilateral relations between the two friendly countries.

Afghanistan

* 'Informed Sources': Najibullah Has Fled Kabul

93P50069A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 25 Feb 93 pp 1, 4

[Excerpts] London, Kabul, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Informed sources in the Afghan capital, Kabul, yesterday affirmed that the former Communist ruler Mohammad Najibullah has fled from the capital and may now be in Uzbekistan. However, members of Najibullah's family who live in New Delhi said that they cannot "confirm or deny" these reports.

Ahmad Sharafi, the spokesman for the former president's family, said that Najibullah "has been forced to leave his place of residence because of recent developments, but it is not clear whether he subsequently also left the country." [passage omitted]

Afghan Government sources yesterday mentioned that they could not comment on the reports that were circulating for the first time in a German weekly magazine that Najibullah had actually arrived in Tashkent, the capital of neighboring Uzbekistan, which is ruled by the Communists. [passage omitted]

Ministers Meeting Held To Discuss Issues

LD2502132793 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pushto 0230 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] A meeting of ministers was chaired yesterday morning by Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Shah Ahmadzay. The meeting was held at Golkhana Palace of the Prime Ministry.

The press department of the Prime Ministry reported that, in accordance with the agenda, the session discussed the report of the economic commission and adopted needed measures. The report was presented by esteemed Hamidullah Tarzi, chairman of the extraordinary commission, and covered topics ranging from the allocation of resources to the payment of salaries and coupons to state employees.

Then Transport Minister al-Haj Mohammad Khalil Zohad presented a report to the session concerning the import of gasoline and oil products from Pakistan. He said that 2,000 tonnes of diesel [words indistinct] will be transported through land routes. Other [words indistinct] will be delivered by two aircraft. He added that the reactivation of Meli Bus has been continuing. Great attention has been devoted to this. The ministers praised the transport of oil and the reactivation of city buses in order to provide facilities for Kabul citizens.

Also discussed were topics regarding the elimination of problems faced by enterprises and the cessation of war and the establishment of peace and security in Kabul. Necessary measures were adopted.

Fresh Skirmishes Reported in Southern Kabul

BK2602115093 Hong Kong AFP in English 1143 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] Kabul, Feb 26 (AFP)—Hezb-e Eslami rebels had made ground toward central Kabul on Friday [26 February] after overnight skirmishes with government forces, pushing within about one kilometre (half a mile) of the psychologically important Artan bridge.

The rebel faction, which does not recognise the government of President Borhanoddin Rabbani, has over the last 10 days gained almost two kilometres (more than a mile) of terrain north of Chelsitoon, which was seized last month after the partial defeat of a government offensive.

Long lines of refugees straggled along the road from the bridge, held by pro-government forces, to Chelsitoon on Friday.

Taking advantage of a lull in fighting, they carried large bundles and pushed handcarts full of possessions recovered from their abandoned homes in Chelsitoon.

Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud's mojahadin rebels, appearing nervous, said artillery and rocket fire was exchanged throughout the night. Intermittent firing continued during the day, despite the presence of the refugees and the truce declared by both sides to respect the religious season of Ramadan.

The strategic importance of the Artan bridge for the Hezb forces is two-fold: the capture of the site gives the forces of Golboddin Hekmatyar a link with the Wahdat forces, a pro-Iranian Shi'ite faction also fighting the government, and opens the route towards the presidential palace about 3.5 kilometres (two miles) away.

However, most analysts said they doubted the Hezb forces were strong enough to launch a decisive breakthrough.

Other Hezb units, along the road towards Logar, further east, are just 2.5 kilometres (1.5 miles) from the palace, but their advance is blocked by the forces of General Rashid Dostam, the powerful Uzbek chief.

The general's former militiamen, whose change of sides contributed to the fall of the communist regime in April, did not take part in the recent fighting in Kabul and the Hezb wants them to stay out of the pro-government camp.

Meanwhile, there was more fighting between pro-government and Wahdat forces overnight Thursday, near the Russian Embassy in the west, but Wahdat forces said it did not last more than half an hour.

The Russian Embassy, ocupied by Wahdat, was evacuated last August.

India

Congress-I Declares BJP Rally 'Complete Failure'

BK2502125093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Although the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] rally at the Boat Club in New Delhi was not allowed to be held, traffic restrictions and diversions in the capital are continuing. According to the Delhi police, security and traffic restrictions in the no-vehicle zone would also continue for the present. About 800 persons have been arrested today for attempting to violate the prohibitory orders in New Delhi area. In a press conference in New Delhi, the BJP spokesman reiterated allegations of police high-handedness in dealing with the party's MP's [Members of Parliament] and workers trying to march to the Boat Club today. He said a number of MP's and other party workers have been injured in the lathi [baton] charge and tear gas by the police and some of them have been admitted to hospitals. Senior BJP leaders, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, Dr. J.K. Jain, and Mr. T.N. Chaturvedi, and some other injured MP's and workers have been taken to Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital for treatment. The medical superintendent told our correspondent that Dr. Joshi and Dr. Jain are under intensive care and their condition though serious is now stable. Mr. T.N. Chaturvedi is out of danger. The minister of state for home affairs, Mr. Rajesh Pilot, visited the hospital to inquire about the health of BJP leaders.

The Congress-I has said that the BJP rally was a complete failure. A statement issued by the AICC-I [All India Congress Committee-I] office-bearers said the rally was unnecessary. Its own objective was to demonstrate the strength of the BJP which it has miserably failed to do.

Up to 60,000 in 'Preventive Custody'

BK2502150293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] president, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, who suffered some injuries while defying prohibitory orders in New Delhi this morning, has been shifted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences for CAT scan. Doctors attending on him said his condition is stable and satisfactory. According to a medical bulletin issued this evening, Dr. Joshi is fully conscious and has been inquring about today's happenings in the city. His X-ray and CAT scan of the brain are normal. The bulletin said the BJP leader has a moderately severe blunt head injury. He has been kept in the intensive care unit for close observation and a medical bulletin says this is routinely done in all such cases. Dr. Joshi was initially admitted to the Ram Manohar Lohia [RML] hospital.

BJP MP's Dr. J.K. Jain, Mr. T.N. Chaturvedi, and some others were admitted to the RML hospital. The medical superintendent said Dr. Jain is in intensive care unit and his condition is stable.

An official spokesman said in New Delhi today that 1,000 persons were arrested for violating prohibitory orders. One hundred and ten BJP Members of Parliament courted arrest. The spokesman said that the situation all over the country is normal. He said nearly 50,000 to 60,000 persons were taken into preventive custody as a precautionary measure in different states. Many of those who were arrested in the capital, including the BJP leader, Mr. Vajpayee, have since been let off. Heavy security arrangements were made to maintain law and order in the capital. The police resorted to lathi [baton] charge and burst tear gas at some places to control the situation. The official spokesman denied any firing by the police at any place. He said about 50 to 60 percent attendance was reported in government offices despite severe restrictions on vehicular movement.

The home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, regretted the inconvenience caused to the people and journalists due to the security arrangements. He said this could have been avoided, had the BJP withdrawn the call for its rally in response to the appeals.

The Delhi police commissioner has said that the BJP rally had petered out. He said the police vigil will continue. He said the overall situation in the capital is under control. The Delhi Transport Corporation [DTC] resumed most of its services from this afternoon following an improvement in the situation. A DTC spokesman said normal services will be available from tomorrow, including interstate services.

Leaders React To Rally Ban

BK2502155693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Leaders of various parties while opposing a general ban on political rallies have appreciated the government's compulsions to ban today's BJP [Bharatiya Janata Dal] rally in the light of the December 6th experiences [following the demolition of Babri Mosque]. Talking to Radio Newsreel, the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] leader, Mr. Som Nath Chaterji, said the issue of construction of a mandir [temple] at Ayodhya, which the BJP wanted to raise at the rally, could have been successfully discussed on the floor of parliament. He said the white paper on Ayodhya issue had already set the agenda for this. The CPI [Communist Party of India] leader, Mr. Inderjit Gupta, said the BJP assurances that it will be able to control its cadres in a large rally cannot be believed now. The Janata Dal leader, Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan, and Mr. S.P. Malaviya of the Janata Dal-S wanted further ban on rallies on the capital to be lifted. Leaders of Congress-S and Janata Dal-A complimented the Center for its effective handling of the situation in the capital today.

The Congress-I has said the BJP rally was a complete failure. A statement issues by the AICC-I [All India Congress Committee-I] office bearers said the rally was unnecessary. Its sole objective was to demonstrate the strength of the BJP which it has miserably failed to do.

The statement said the government is fully justified in banning the rally in view of the delicate laws and order and the sensitive nature of the communal situation. Talking to newsmen, the AICC-I spokesman, Mr. Chandulal Chandrarkar, regretted the inconvenience caused to the public due to the security arrangements.

Minister Says 'Minimum Force Used'

BK2602125693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] The government says only minimum force was used to prevent the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] rally in the capital yesteday and therefore the question of any apology does not arise. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi today, the parliamentary affairs minister, Mr. V.C. Shukla, said that the Home Ministry and the police had done a good job to see that all attempts to violate the law did not succeed. He said those who defied the law should be blamed for yesterday's developments. Mr. Shukla said the government, however, feels sorry that the BJP president, Mr. Murli Manohar Joshi, was hurt. He said according to medical reports, Mr. Joshi is alright now and may be discharged from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences soon. The parliamentary affairs minister described as reprehensible the behavior of the BJP members in both houses of parliament today. He said displaying empty tear gas shells and black flags inside the house was shocking. Asked how the continued disruption in the Lok Sabha will be tackled, he said the speaker has convened a meeting of the Business Advisory Committee tomorrow evening to discuss the matter. Answering another question, Mr. Shukla said the government considers the activities of the BJP as a greatest threat to the country's unity, integrity, and progress. He said it is prepared to meet the threat at political and other levels.

Earlier, both the houses of parliament could not transact the normal business this morning, following noisy protests by the BJP members over the police action in the capital yesterday. This led to adjournment of the Lok Sabha till 1530 and the Rajya Sabha till 1430.

Chavan Not Averse to More Autonomy for Kashmiris

BK2502131293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] The home minister told the Lok Sabha today that the Shiv Sena had played a key role in the recent riots in Bombay. Replying to supplementaries, Mr. S.B. Chavan said certain formalities have to be completed for taking any decision on imposing a ban on the party. He said another option is to take stringent action against the Shiv Sena activities involved in the riots.

Mr. S.B. Chavan has said that the government is prepared to have a dialogue with the Kashmiri militants if they shun violence and proclaim allegiance to the Constitution. If these conditions are met, discussions can be held on other matters pertaining to Jammu and Kashmir. Mr. Chavan was replying to the debate on the statutory resolution seeking extension of president's rule in Jammu and Kashmir for another six months from the third of next month. The house later passed the resolution by a voice vote. The home minister said the government is not averse to the idea of considering more autonomy to local people, if it can lead to a permanent solution to the problem.

President's Rule in Kashmir Valley Viewed

BK2602050593 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] The Lok Sabha has ratified the statutory resolution providing for the continuance of president's rule in Jammu and Kashmir for a further period of six months. It was only to be expected. But, what is heartening is that it reflects the unanimous will of the House notwithstanding certain differences in perception.

The foremost priority in the state remains the restoration of normalcy. For this purpose it is necessary to rid in particular the Kashmir valley of the Pakistan-inspired terrorism. Rapes, extortions, and violence by foreign-aided militants are the negation of the rich ethos of the state. These criminal acts have also taken by surprise a considerable section of the emotionally surcharged local youths.

The ratification of the statutory resolution comes within days of the president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, giving a clear warning to Pakistan to desist from its nefarious role in Jammu and Kashmir, and Punjab. The president has rightly pointed out in his address to the joint session of the two houses of parliament that if India's effort to amicably resolve bilateral disputes have not made any headway, it is because of Pakistan. The home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, has also pointed out that Pakistan is trying to spread its tentacles as far as the northeast by helping insurgents. This is apart from the training camps being held by Pakistan for Kashmir terrorists besides providing them with money and sophisticated arms.

Considering the active involvement of such a country in fanning secessionism in the valley, it is to be appreciated if the government acts with extreme caution. The government's assessment actually is the same as that of the all-party delegation that had visited the valley recently. The delegation had come to the conclusion that top-most priority had to be accorded to the removal of the fear of the gun. Indian security forces have given a fairly good account of themselves in the state by getting the better of Pakistan-trained militants. An evidence of this is the excellent coordination between them and the people in the capital city of Srinagar. People do flock to medical and other services being provided by security forces in their muhallas [areas]. They also feel encouraged to defy the ban on burkas [veils] imposed by fundamentalists. The exercise in mutual goodwill needs to be carried forward to a logical conclusion. That will be a befitting reply to Pakistan's designs and will pave the way for early restoration of the democratic order.

Paper Calls For Increased Research, Development

BK2602053893 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 16 Feb 93 p 8

[Editorial: "Sad Neglect of R&D"]

[Text] Scientists are understandably concerned about the Central Government's intention to drastically reduce its allocations to research and development laboratories around the country. R&D [research and development] supported by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has not in the past been as richly funded as scientists would have wished, given the size and high quality of scientific alent in India, the special needs of the country and the challenges from abroad. And, over the last three years, CSIR's budgetary support for research establishments has been cut from Rs [rupees] 28 crore to Rs 16 crore. R&D laboratories have been trying to find up to a third of the required resources on their own. Now, deeper cuts in Central allocations are to be expected. Mr R. Kumaramangalam, Union Minister of State for Science and Technology, announced the other day that labs will have to raise half of their requirements from other sources. his has led to greater consternation in R&D establishments.

The Government may not have the budgetary resources to sustain former levels of support to R&D, but there is no denying that the centralised bureaucracy is least interested in utilising the existing talent to give an impetus to scientific work. In keeping with the current philosophy of market liberalisation, R&D laboratories are required to justify their research programmes in terms of the presumed demands of the marketplace. Over three- quarters of the expenditure on both basic and applied research comes from the Central Government and the public sector at present. Industrial research consists of some 25 per cent of the whole. But the private sector which has been a major beneficiary of both kinds of research has contributed only about a tenth of the country's total R&D funds. This attitude clearly needs to change for the benefit of domestic R&D and the private sector itself. Of course, foreign science and technology will compete strongly for the private sector's attention under the new liberalised rules. However, price, flexibility and domestic talent should give indigenous suppliers of scientific knowhow and technology the edge in many areas.

Having to compete in the marketplace, R&D labs themselves will strive for greater efficiency and accountability than has hitherto been the case. In fact anything that will induce a rigorous overhaul of projects, methods and manpower in our scientific establishments should be welcome. Some of the better R&D setups in the country already get a third of their financial resources from external sources. It is essential, as the Government pulls out of financing many areas of industrial research, that it invests more heavily in basic research programmes directly and in tandem with universities.

Iran

UN Mission Denies CIA Director's 'Allegations'

LD2602135593 Tehran IRNA in English 1330 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] United Nations, New York, Feb. 26, IRNA—Iran's permanent mission here has categorically denied the "unfounded allegations" levelled against the Islamic Republic by the new CIA director, James Woolsey, in his testimony to a Senate panel Wednesday [24 February].

The mission's statement, issued here Thursday, said that "the testimony was another piece in the cynical scheme of creating a bogeyman out of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Middle East which seems to be an integral part of the United States foreign policy."

It noted that the Islamic Republic of Iran had denounced nuclear weapons and had expressed full commitment to [the] non-proliferation treaty (npt). Iran had always condemned the use of nuclear bombs, biological and chemical weapons, it added.

Woolsey told the Senate Government Affairs Committee Wednesday that Iran intended to undertake nuclear activities concealed from the international inspectors.

Referring to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's reply to a question by a Japanese reporter at a news conference in Tehran on 11 February, Woolsey said that Hashemi-Rafsanjani had hinted at "a strategy for circumventing the IAEA". The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) supervises the use of the atomic power for the welfare of the human beings and not for military purposes.

"How could Woolsey's active imagination interpret the president's answer to 'a strategy for circumventing the IAEA' is beyond a straightforward and unadulterated testimony," the statement said.

It stated that Iran welcomed a more vigorous safeguard inspection by the IAEA, and in this respect, IAEA recently inspected undeclared sites in Iran. "As for other weapons of mass destruction, it may be recalled that Iran is a victim of chemical weapons and a staunch supporter and drafter of the chemical weapons convention," the statement concluded.

Israel Said Behind Campaign Against Iran

LD2602141193 Tehran IRNA in English 1350 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Text] London, Feb. 26, IRNA—The Zionist regime has confessed to waging a worldwide campaign against the Islamic Republic and resorting to every means at its disposal. But there has been no admission yet of its direct involvement in refuelling the Rushdie dispute.

Two statements from deputy foreign minister, Yosi Beilin and from Chief of General Staff, Lt.-Gen. Ehud Baraq last week spoke of some of the measures Israel was using to gain influence and support against its recognized

enemy. Beilin told the Knesset that the Zionist regime was "employing widespread diplomatic contacts" to conduct campaigns. This, he said, was to explain what was going on and to "pressure them not to help Iran." He revealed one of the common smears was making allegations about Iran's nuclear weapons program. This is despite the fact that Iran, unlike Israel, is a signatory of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and regularly has its civilian facilities internationally inspected.

In line with the same propaganda campaign, the CIA director, James Woolsey, using his "active imagination", has levelled charges that Iran intended to undertake nuclear activities concealed from the international inspectors. Iran's mission to the United Nations in New York, Thursday rejected the allegations as "unfounded."

Baraq, also quoted by the weekly international edition of THE JERUSALEM POST, made the usual abusive remarks to link Iran with what he called "terrorism" to deflect attention away from Israel's systematic criminal acts in Lebanon and the occupied territories.

The admissions by the deputy foreign minister are thought to be the first by the Zionist regime on how it considers diplomacy should be used for its vested interests. Its extensive worldwide media influence is more regularly known for its propaganda. Coming at a time of a renewed campaign in Britain to use the Rushdie affair as a political dispute with Iran, it increases the suspicion that Israel may be actively involved, if not totally behind it.

The apostate author has grouped many Jewish writers around him as his so-called 'literary friends.' These include Israeli novelist Avraham Yehoshua, who wrote to Rushdie to say that the fatwa on his life is a "collective" one against all Israelis.

Khamene'i Friday Prayers Sermon 26 Feb

LD2602145293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1200 GMT 26 Feb 93

[Second Friday sermon by Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i at Tehran University on 26 February—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. [passage omitted—Koranic verses]. First of all I wish to offer my condolences and sorrow for the flood damage in several provinces of the country. I offer my condolences to the victims, whether they have lost their family members or their assets, houses and livelihood. This is a divine test. They, as well as the rest of the Iranian nation, should realize that floods and earthquakes are not inherently a scourge. They can be either a blessing or a scourge. After floods and earthquakes, if the state authorities deal with these incidents with complacency and fail to learn a lesson in reconstruction methods, such flooding and earthquakes will truly be a scourge and a disaster. However, when after floods and earthquakes the people show greater movement to make up for the losses, the movement in itself is an important matter. It is a highly good gesture when the people of the country rise to assist the victims and express sympathy and fraternity. [passage omitted]

I wish to recommend that now after the flood, after this natural incident, everyone, that is, the government and the nation, the flood-stricken people and others should join hands to turn the flood into a blessing. It must change from being a disaster. The people should help the victims. The officials must work hard, and praise be to God, they are working hard. To be fair the officials are working for the flood-stricken regions. [passage omitted]

There are a number of issues in the world of Islam which are very bitter. Even if one tries to turn away, one witnesses bitterness and misery. Of course Muslims can find solutions if they take steps. One of them is the problem of Bosnia-Hercegovina; this issue has not ended. Let the people and officials not think that just because we have done something for Bosnia-Hercegovina that we have carried out our duty. No sir, we must support them as much as we can. I do not mean just financial and material support, even though this might also be needed. We must support them politically, we must endeavor. [passage omitted]

Is this a joke? They have placed a people in the circle of pestilence. They have been suffering under constant pressure. Every ugly act that can possibly be done to a people has been done to them. They take their lives, they plunder their wealth, they destroy their homes, they occupy their land, they rape their honor [namus]. There is nothing worse, nothing more ugly. They sit in the world and look on and, I believe, they are killing time. Everyday someone comes and says something; the Europeans say something, the bullies of the other side [the United States] say something else, the United Nations says something. They are all empty words.

What a pity we cannot reach those people to defend them. Alas, young Muslims in the country of Islam and the Koran cannot get themselves to defend [the Bosnians]; or else the aggressors would have seen what Islamic power and Islamic honor mean! [Crowd chants in support]

Another issue is the problem of Afghanistan where the same bitter incidents are taking place. Unfortunately today those gentlemen, parties and groups are inflicting such disasters on Afghanistan and its people that have not often happened in the past. Those disasters are taking place because of factionalism, fanaticism, lack of national unity, attaching importance to various races saying that this person belongs to the white race and that one belongs to the yellow race, this person speaks Persian and the other speaks Pashto, this person is Shiite and the other is Sunni, this person recognizes this gentleman as his leader, the other someone else. That is what happens to a nation when it's managers think of such issues and that is what you can see happening in Afghanistan. [passage omitted praising Khomeyni]

In any case we are really sad about what is happening in Afghanistan and the same applies to what is happening in Palestine. I have previously advised Afghan brothers and I do the same now, saying that the case of the Afghan

nation is different from the case of those who are engaged in fighting. They should do something so that the Afghan nation does not become weary of those who are involved in clashes and fighting.

In general I would like to mention one point: Today global arrogance snarls at the world of Islam. You must be aware of that fact. It is a very strange way of snarling. Where there is Islamic feeling, then arrogance confronts it with total anger. And whoever is against the Muslims, then the arrogant ones and bullies of the world—whether America or those lesser ones who have the same attitude to Islam—will be kind to him.

Of course, despite all these hostilities and such enemies Islam is making progress. Today Islam's expansion is above that of last year. If you see that the world radio stations and propaganda are trying, in sensational tones, to insinuate that the peoples of the world have turned against Islamic fundamentalism or militant Islam, it is one of those lies and tricks which arrogance tries to spread. The reality is the other way round.

If the nations had turned against Islam, then they would not have been forced to spend so much money in North Africa, in Arab countries, and in Central Asia to counter the Islamist waves. As the days pass by Islam finds an ever greater place in the hearts of the people. Of course, one reason for it is that the Iranian nation, with the grace of God, was the guardian of its revolution and remained so. Despite all the remarks which the enemies were trying to spread, with your grand presence on 22 Bahman [11 February, revolution day] you dealt a powerful blow to the mouth of the enemies. Now you must prepare yourselves to take part in Jerusalem Day marches [held every year on the last Friday of Ramadan; 19 March in 1993]. That too is a grand scene to prove to all that the Iranian nation is on the scene, is awake and steadfast, fearing no power and no bully in the world. [audience chants slogans in support] [passage omitted—final prayers]

President's Message To EC Critical of West

LD2502225593 Tehran IRNA in English 1816 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] London, Feb. 25, IRNA—European Community (EC) leaders are yet undecided on how to respond to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's message that challenges both the discriminatory behavior and selective approach of the West on world issues.

Prime Minister John Major's office was unable to say Thursday [25 February] when a reply may be forthcoming or whether last week's communique would be first discussed with the other 11 European leaders, who were in receipt of the same letter.

Further disclosures on the contents of the message relate scathing criticism of Western attitudes towards international relations, which only underline the predicament faced by the EC heads of government in answering and is reflected by the press silence on the communique.

The contradictions, the Iranian president said, were "palpable." In the case of blatant Serbian aggression in Bosnia, the behavior of the West was "obvious lethargy and neglectful double standards," while on Israel's criminal acts it was "unflinching support."

In particular, he said history would never forgive the duplicity practised in regard to Iraq's two consecutive invasions. First giving Baghdad its "blessing" to its war against Iran, then rising against Iraq over Kuwait "without delay or equivocation."

Hashemi-Rafsanjani questioned if Iran was not justified in doubting the goodwill of governments, who also, out of sheer self-interest and ulterior political motives, lend support to well-known terrorists, who have themselves claimed responsibility for and confessed to planting bombs that killed hundreds at popular gatherings in Iran.

The Iranian president implicitly referred to the outlawed Monafeqin-e Khalq terrorist group, who parade freely on London and Washington streets as well as elsewhere in Europe and receive open support from several political parties, if not governments.

What is the logical justification? And can the discriminatory treatment of the victims of the Iranian Airbus deliberately shot down by the U.S. in 1988 also be explained? He asked in his letter, adding that he doubted if other countries would show much tolerance.

One of the main dilemmas for the West in answering home-truths about its behavior is that much of the misleading and overt hostile propaganda against Iran is still continuing, which Hashemi-Rafsanjani said he found perplexing.

On attempts to refuel the Rushdie affair by raising the issue on a high political platform, the Iranian president said such hue and cry, "whatever the disguise, is nothing but an outrageous insult to the Islamic world and the rights of more than a billion Muslims."

Yet again answering the baseless propaganda generated over the affair, Hashemi-Rafsanjani went on to warn that it was "certainly not" in the West's interests to act simple-minded.

With regard to the smears of alleged arms purchases, he pointed out that Iran, despite an eight-year war, had allocated only 1.6 per cent of its GDP to military expenditure and compared to other states in the region, whose spending was between three and 15 times higher.

Criticism about democracy and human rights were equally false and again contrasted favorably with other countries. Not only has Iran held more than 12 nationwide elections in the past 14 years, but under the Constitution, religious minorities enjoyed equal rights.

If, as the EC maintained, in its declaration at its last summit, it wanted to have a dialogue with Iran, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said his government was not only ready and desirous in "serious, frank and critical exchange of views" but that they were essential.

In Hashemi-Rafsanjani's opinion the challenges and problems of the world today, especially in Europe and the Middle East, made such contacts and consultations "imperative."

EC Urged To Heed President's Message

NC2602124393 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 22 Feb 93 pp 1, 12

[Unattributed commentary: "A New Chapter in World Diplomacy" from the "In the Margin" column]

[Excerpts] In a clear message, the president has clarified our country's stance on the international scene for the European Community.

This message was published at a time when the European Community has been resorting to politicking in every way it can. Europe hopes that in view of the extensive developments in the nineties, especially after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, it can move toward unifying the continent. Even though many European experts consider the economy the number one condition or the infrastructure that is necessary for this unity, nevertheless—as our president pointed out—the existing problems that stem from the European Community's adherence to U.S. policies is the major obstacle to this unity.

While trying to blindly endorse the policies of the United States and arms-manufacturing cartels, the European Community also is painting an unrealistic picture of the Islamic Republic. [passage omitted]

The recipients of the president's message are well aware of the fact that for years the United States has been trying to open the doors of negotiations with Islamic Iran but each time has only faced a dead end.

Europe's endorsement of the unjust political stances of the United States toward the Muslims, and especially Muslims in the Middle East, have removed all grounds for cooperation.

The sole objective of the [president's] call for explicit talks is to clarify our country's regional position once again in Europe's political perspective.

If the opportunity that has arisen in the region with Hashemi-Rafsanjani's message for the European Community to play an anti-colonialist role on the basis of regional cooperation is ignored, the European Community will be omitted from all political equations in this region in the future.

Envoy Criticizes Canada, UK for Backing Rushdie

LD2602095493 Tehran IRNA in English 1157 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Vienna, Feb. 25, IRNA—Iran's envoy to the Geneva-based United Nations headquarters Sirous Nasseri has criticized the support of the Canadian and British representatives to the current human rights assembly for apostate Salman Rushdie.

"Even though Rushdie might be a symbol of freedom of speech for some Western countries, especially for Canadians, one billion Muslims all over the globe consider him as a symbol of Western intentions against Muslims and their venerables," Nasseri said in a statement.

Representing Iran at the assembly he pointed to the fact that different religions, especially Judaism, Christianity and Islam have forbidden insult to venerables.

"Of course every country and nation has the right to choose its heros and symbols, even though these symbols can sometime coincide with destruction and wickedness, but these symbols should not be forced upon others," said the statement.

Nasseri said Rushdie has insulted the feelings and deep beliefs of Muslims, and his action has resulted in the deaths of hundreds of people.

"If Canada and some Western countries consider Rushdie and his book 'holy', it is their business and they better keep it for themselves," Nasseri added.

Embassy Does Not Confirm UAE Deported Iranians

LD2602101093 Tehran IRNA in English 1623 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Feb. 25, IRNA—The Islamic Republic Embassy to the United Arab Emirates today did not confirm a report by Agence France Presse (AFP) on UAE's expulsion of 13 Iranians for attempting to illegally cross into the emirates over the first two weeks of February.

AFP quoting the UAE Interior Ministry on Tuesday [23 February] reported that police had arrested 34 foreigners, including Iranians, Indian, Afghan and Pakistani nationals for trying to enter the Emirate illegally.

About 140 to 145 thousand Iranians are presently living in UAE, of whom 105,000 hold passports and valid residence permission cards.

The Abu Dhabi government arrests and expels foreign workers whose residence cards are issued in Dubai, Sharja and other emirates. This however is not practised in the other emirates including Dubai and Sharja.

Velayati Backs ANC in Message to Mandela

LD2602102993 Tehran IRNA in English 1630 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 25, IRNA—Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati in a message to leader of the African National Congress (ANC) Nelson Mandela has stressed the need for cooperation among all struggling groups to establish a broad-based government in South Africa.

Velayati also voiced the Islamic Republic's full scale support for all freedom movements of the world particularly the ANC.

The message was submitted to Mandela in Johannesburg by head of the Foreign Ministry's second department Sobhani.

Elsewhere in the message, Velayati said that Iran would cooperate with the future government of South Africa to be established by the South African people from various walks of life.

Mandela, thanking Velayati for his message, lauded Iran's stance on the struggle of the South African people against apartheid.

On the ANC's attitudes towards possible lifting of political and economic sanctions against the Pretoria regime, he said if Pretoria agreed on a date for setting up a national transitional government, ANC would support lifting of all sanctions except for oil and arms.

Commentary: Make Better Use of Foreign Policy

NC2602123193 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 20 Feb 93 p 1

[Akbar Nabavi editorial: "New Conditions, New Beliefs"]

[Text] It seems that in view of its special position, Islamic Iran can now make better use of its foreign diplomacy. The truth is:

1. Now, more than ever, the Islamic revolution is witnessing the fulfillment of its global objectives in Islamic and non-Islamic countries. "Religious awakening" and the hoisting of the banner of struggles "to revive historic Islamic identity" and "gain national independence" among the millions in Islamic societies proves this. The growth demonstrates the ideological presence of the Islamic revolution beyond Iran's geographic borders. We will not be exaggerating if we say that the Islamic Republic of Iran is the standard-bearer of the process that is giving back divine and human "identity" to "contemporary mankind." This heralds a strong global force that backs the Islamic revolution.

This force considers the revolution to be part of it and itself to be part of the revolution. With this "force" at its disposal, the Islamic Republic should enter the scene of world political equations not as a mere country; its foreign policy officials should always remember that they represent an international uprising that granted Iran all the special characteristics of a superior power.

2. Special global geopolitical conditions have opened up particular paths to countries like Iran. These conditions have found new world economic and regional powers emerging on the international economy, Marxism disintegrating, and America's economic power declining because of the ability of most countries—that were, until some time ago, U.S. satellites—to do without the United States. Under these special conditions, Iran and countries with special political characteristics very similar to Iran's, find themselves before incredible possibilities for maneuvering in foreign diplomacy, economic relations, and... [ellipsis as published], in that many of the technical, technological, industrial, and... [ellipsis as published] monopolies no longer exist and the choice of economic, technological, and technical markets is wider. Under these new conditions, the United States and countries like it can no longer use their military, economic, and industrial policies to impose their arrogant policies on independent countries.

3. Countries don't underestimate or forget Iran's 60-million strong market. Competition for a presence in it, while not overt, is extremely serious. Recession in many world economic and industrial sectors and Iran's rapid movement toward economic self-sufficiency and toward gaining access to modern technology and industry form the new conditions that find the world focussing more on Iran. If, in the past, others tried everything to sell their goods to Iran, it seems that now it is we who can create the necessary conditions in some cases and also benefit from them. This special situation has opened up new paths for diplomatic overtures to the system's foreign policy officials.

Paper Backs Majles Move To Impeach Sa'idi-Kia

LD2502140293 Tehran IRNA in English 1331 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 25, IRNA—The 'TEHRAN TIMES' Thursday [25 February] supported the impeachment of the roads and transport minister by the Majlis but reiterated that this would not mean a vote of no-confidence against the cabinet. During the Tuesday open session of the Majlis, 40 deputies censured a motion against the Roads and Transport Minister Mohammad Sa'idi-Kia following several air and train accidents. Some 134 people were killed in a collision of a leased Russian Tupolev and an air force Sukhoi over Tehran on February 8. Last April, 39 people died when a small chartered plane crashed near Saveh, southwest of Tehran.

The daily termed the motion as "sound and apt" adding, "this is reflective of the independent view which the Majlis can have in having a role in the important decisions made in the country."

The daily rejected that a no-confidence vote against a minister would strike a blow on President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani with regards to the June presidential elections.

"The aim behind holding any form of elections in Iran is to reflect the will power of the people and their role in determining the country's fate," said the daily adding that the motion tabled by people's representatives was the "crystallization of the people's demand." Turning to the 10 day deadline that the minister has to defend his management according to the Majlis regulations, the daily said that even a vote of no-confidence by the Majlis would not mean a no-confidence against President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's cabinet.

Stressing that people's representatives should be allowed to fulfill their duty without being influenced by the

prevailing atmosphere, it said "observing the deeds and acts of the country's managers will bring about further soundness and refinement for the system."

Maldives

President Praises Island Country's Growth Rate

BK2502101693 Hong Kong AFP in English 0940 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Colombo, Feb 25 (AFP)—Maldivian President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom said his tiny Indian Ocean atoll nation had made impressive strides in the socio-economic field to post a growth rate of nearly 10 percent.

Gayoom made the observation during the opening of a new session of the Citizens' Majlis or parliament late Thursday in Male, the Maldives High Commission (embassy) here said in a statement.

The Maldivian economy had been "doing very well" to achieve one of the best economic indicators in South Asia with a near 10 percent growth rate and per capita income of more than 600 dollars, he said.

"More areas for the expansion of the economy will be explored. Fishing and tourism remain the two major economic activities which continue to bring increased output and revenue," Gayoom said.

Gayoom said that in the past 14 years Maldives had seen enormous improvement in living standards, the setting up of more schools, hospitals and health centres and better communications, transport and electricity facilities.

He said Maldives has attained South Asia's highest literacy rate of 98 percent due to the country's liberal education programme that has been beneficial to more than 70,000 students of the Maldives population of 220,000 inhabitants.

The Maldivian leader said that the country's "tremendous achievement" in the socio-economic fields was due to the peace and stability that prevailed throughout the Muslim archipelago of some 1,190 islands.

Gayoom urged the people to contribute even more to reap the same results and strengthen the prevailing unity and cohesion "especially during this year when the presidential elections will be held."

The moderate Islamic leader is expected to run for a record fourth five-year term when presidential polls are held later this year. Gayoom has ruled the tiny state since 1978.

Pakistan

Main Afghan Groups Invited to Talks in Islamabad

BK2502161993 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 25 feb 93

[Text] Pakistan has invited Afghanistan's warring factions for peace talks. Pakistan is understood to have asked the leaders of the main Afghanistan mojahedin factions to come to Islamabad for talks during the forthcoming state visit of the Afghan president, Borhanoddin Rabbani, to Pakistan.

Hekmatyar on Invitation

BK2502144093 Hong Kong AFP in English 1426 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] ISLAMABAD, Feb 25 (AFP)—Afghan rebel leader Golboddin Hekmatyar said Thursday [25 February] he had been invited by the Pakistan government to hold talks with Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani in Islamabad.

In a statement released here by his Afghan News Agency (ANA), Hekmatyar said he had told Islamabad he would accept the tripartite talks if Rabbani agreed in principle to the formation of an interim government and elections within a year.

No confirmation of the invitation was available in Pakistan, which said Wednesday that Rabbani would pay an official visit to Islamabad "shortly" without specifying a date.

Factional battles in and around Kabul have continued since Afghan mojahedin took over at the fall of the Soviet-installed communist regime in April.

The latest flareup between Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami and its Shiite ally, Hezb-e Wahdat, and government forces started in January after the controversial re-election of Rabbani.

Since then, an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 Afghans have died and many more have been injured, though the fighting has eased because of a fragile truce during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan and efforts by private Pakistani mediators.

Hekmatyar blasted Rabbani's statement over Kabul radio Tuesday in which he reportedly asked Hezb forces to surrender and accept his authority.

"Rabbani's regime wants the continuation of war," he said, adding "it does not like a peaceful resolution of the conflict."

In Tehran, newspapers quoted Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati as saying that several Afghan groups including Hekmatyar's party had accepted an Iranian invitation for negotiations in Iran.

Velayati, who gave no date for the proposed meeting, said Rabbani's government had not yet replied.

The Hezb leader's statement circulated here did not refer to the Iranian invitation. Hekmatyar said Rabbani was "doing everything" posible to organize an international conference on Afghanistan under the auspices of the United Nations and also with the involvement of Iran, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

Expressing his opposition to such a meeting, Hekmatyar said "we will not allow foreign hands to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

Aircraft Offered To Air Drop Food to Bosnia

BK2502151293 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Pakistan has offered its transport aircraft for UN-sponsored air drop of food to the besieged Muslim towns in eastern Bosnia-Hercegovina. Pakistan's ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Jamshed Marker, has conveyed his government's decision to the UN Secretariat which is coordinating the air drop operation. Pakistan is the first country offering its aircraft for the purpose. Mr. Jamshed Marker said the air drop operation would not affect the UN effort to deliver relief supplies through land route. And in Washington, Bosnian foreign minister Mr. Haris Silajdzic, met the Pakistan's the ambassador to the United States, Begum Abida Hussain, and expresssed his gratitude to the government of Pakistan for its decision to take part in the relief operation.

Islamabad on Strike in Indian Kashmir

BK2502152093 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] In occupied Kashmir, complete strike was observed in all the major towns of the held valley to protest Indian reign of terror. According to KMS [KASHMIR MEDIA SERVICE] a mujahid [freedom fighter] arrested by troops was tortured to death in the interrogation cell. The incident sent a wave of anger in the valley and people demonstrated in streets against the Indian brutality.

Meanwhile, clashes between the Indian troops and mujahidin continued across the valley. A convoy of military vehicles was ambushed by mujahidin on Badgam-Srinagar road inflicting heavy casualties on the troops. Three Indian soldiers were injured when mujahidin stormed a military checkpost in Durabad. Mujahidin also captured arms and ammunition left behind by the fleeing troops. Two Indian troops were killed in a clash with mujahidin during house-to- house search in Pulwama.

Chinese Firm To Build 2 Sections of Indus Highway

BK2502145493 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Contract for the building of 9th and 10th sectors of Indus highway project was signed between National Highway Authority and China Petroleum Construction Company of China in Islamabad today. The total length of the two sections is 206 km. It will be completed at an estimated cost of approximately two billion rupees.

Sri Lanka

LTTE Suffers Heavy Casualties in Bunker Raid

BK2502141493 Hong Kong AFP in English 1259 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] COLOMBO, Feb 25 (AFP)—Tamil separatist guerrillas Thursday [25 February] attacked an army bunker line in northern Sri Lanka, killing five soldiers and losing at least 15 of their own men, military officials here said Thursday.

About 150 Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas carried out simultaneous pre-dawn strikes on six bunkers in Nanathan in coastal Mannar district, killing five soldiers and wounding nine others, officials said.

Chief military spokesman, Brigadier Nalin Angamanna, told reporters that LTTE guerrillas tried to penetrate army defence firing mortars, rockets and light machine guns but were repulsed by army reinforcements.

Another army officer said that military intercepts of LTTE radio transmission confirmed that 15 LTTE cadres were killed and dozens wounded when troops, backed by tanks, retaliated in a battle that lasted about 30 minutes.

"We believe their losses are much higher. According to LTTE radio messages they had lost a major, a captain, four lieutenants, two second lieutenants, three ordinary cadres and four recruits," the officer said.

The Tigers are fighting for a separate state in the north-east for Sri Lanka's minority Tamils.